



# PROGRAM HANDBOOK

## NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

### Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Student Handbook

**2024-2025**

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**NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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Welcome PTA students!

Congratulations on your recent acceptance to the PTA program at North Shore Community College. The faculty and I look forward to embarking on the upcoming exciting and busy months or learning ahead of you. The PTA curriculum is very challenging and requires a lot of studying, participation and good time management. Clinical education plays a large and important part in the curriculum. The faculty is dedicated to help ensure competency in your skills prior to treating patients and being part of the interprofessional team during clinical experiences.

The faculty has the following expectations from all PTA students. They are as follows:

- Attending and arriving to class and clinical in a punctual manner.
- Arriving to class and clinical prepared for learning activities.
- Demonstrating professional behavior and adherence to the profession's value-based behaviors.
- Demonstrating responsibility for your own learning and a commitment to learning.
- Demonstrating the ability to independently, problem solve and think critically.
- Demonstrating the ability to accept constructive feedback from faculty and peers.
- Demonstrating courteous and respectful interactions with faculty, staff and peers.
- Accepting responsibility for your learning.

The PTA Program Student Handbook has been developed to help you become familiar with important PTA program information and our program policies and procedures. This handbook comprises of academic policies and an overview of clinical education policies. More detail on clinical education policies and grading process for clinical experiences are further explained in the PTA Program Clinical Education Handbook.

To learn more about the North Shore Community College in terms of mission, vision and core values, please refer to: <https://www.northshore.edu/about/index.html> It is also important that you familiarize yourself with North Shore Community College's Student Handbook. (<https://northshore.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/college-catalog/student-handbook/>) It will include general College policies, which you will find helpful.

Information on current charges (tuition and fees, health insurance costs), payment options, financial aid and refund policies can be found here: <https://www.northshore.edu/paying/index.html>

It is the responsibility of each student to carefully review the College Student Handbook and PTA Program and Clinical Education Handbooks. We expect that you will utilize all of the available department and college resources as you successfully engage in attaining your PTA education. Students are responsible for adhering to PTA program and college wide policies and procedures.

We are looking forward to working with you in achieving your Associates degree in Science and entering the dynamic and rewarding field of physical therapy as a licensed Physical Therapist Assistant.

Diane Caruso

Department Chair

### **Division of Health Professions Mission Statement**

The Division of Health Professions enriches lives and the community through high quality health and human service degree and certificate programs that are responsive to societal, and workforce needs. The Division strives to inspire student success and lifelong learning through interpersonal, interprofessional, and community collaboration needed for impactful and sustainable employment. We facilitate student learning, scholarship, and leadership with a commitment to excellence in person-centered care.

### **Physical Therapist Assistant Program Mission Statement**

North Shore Community College's Physical Therapist Assistant Program offers a comprehensive curriculum, which emphasizes theory, knowledge and skills necessary for contemporary physical therapy practice across a variety of practice settings. The broad-based curriculum promotes student development of self-directed entry-level competence and leadership in preparation for employment. The program faculty values commitment to the physical therapy profession, excellence in education, lifelong learning and servicing our community.

### **Physical Therapist Assistant Program Goals**

1. The PTA program faculty will deliver a program leading to licensure and entry level PTA practice.
2. The PTA program faculty will promote the importance of professional development through lifelong learning opportunities and membership in professional organizations.
3. The PTA program will provide students with an appropriate and contemporary curriculum that adheres to institutional guidelines, CAPTE and Standards for Ethical Conduct.
4. The PTA program will maintain a current curriculum with ongoing input from program stakeholders.
5. PTA program graduates will provide safe and effective physical therapy treatment while adhering to Standards for Ethical Conduct and federal/state practice standards.
6. PTA program graduates will demonstrate professionalism through positive expression of cooperation, adaptability and willingness to learn.

### **Physical Therapist Assistant Program Overview – Curriculum Design and Philosophy**

North Shore Community College's Physical Therapist Assistant Program has been accredited by the Commission on Education for Physical Therapy Education since 1975. The program consists of a student body comprising of various cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Over the past years, the program has successfully graduated many individuals who are currently seasoned clinicians and clinical instructors practicing and educating in the North Shore area. On average, the program graduates approximately twenty-five (25) students per year and the average passing rate for the licensing exam is between 90 to 95 percent.

The Physical Therapist Assistant department's educational philosophy places emphasis on offering a variety of learning experiences, where newly learned material is applied within that particular course through case scenarios, patient/client simulations, field trips and service learning. This is believed to foster early critical thinking and promotes the development of problem-solving skills, which is necessary for competency as an entry-level Physical Therapist Assistant practitioner.

Students admitted to the Physical Therapist Assistant program take Anatomy and Physiology 1 and 2, Composition 1 and 2, and an elective in Humanities. These general education courses are considered foundational in preparation for Physical Therapy courses which are offered sequentially in the curriculum based on pre-requisite and co-requisite requirements. During the first semester of study, physical therapy

courses are offered at the introductory level, however application of the knowledge is expected through concurrent laboratory, service learning and clinical experiences.

Following the first semester of study, physical therapy courses become more technical in nature. Students are required to build upon previously learned information in order for understanding and safe application of more advanced concepts to follow.

At the beginning of the final semester, prior to our terminal ten (10) week clinical experience/internship, students enroll in a final six-week comprehensive course (PTA 210) which has been designed to review all competency based and didactic material presented within the program. The course has been implemented at the end of the program in order to prepare students for two final clinical experiences. Students enrolled in the course have the opportunity to perform advanced analysis of a complex case study where integration and application of previously learned material is evaluated by program faculty.

Overall, our program seeks to offer a comprehensive curriculum with emphasis on active learning, civic engagement, critical thinking and problem solving. The program may be completed in either 2 or 3 years of study. Upon completion, students graduate with an Associate's Degree in Science and are eligible to apply and take the national licensing exam administered by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy.

### **PTA Department Faculty Contact Information**

#### **Program Director / Department Chair / Professor**

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#### **Professor**

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#### **Associate Professor/ Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE)**

Diane Caruso, PTA MS.Ed

#### **Adjunct Faculty**

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## GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

### PTA Program Options of Study

The PTA program is offered in two options of study designed to meet the needs of students. They include:

1. Traditional full time (completed in 2 years)
2. Part time (completed in 3 years)

Program requirements are the same for each option of study (66 credits) leading to an Associates in Science with a major in Physical Therapist Assistant.

### Full-Time Curriculum Sequence (66 credits)

YEAR 1		CREDITS
<b>Fall</b>	BIO 211, Anatomy & Physiology 1	4
	CMP 101, Composition 1	3
	PTA 115, Introduction to Physical Therapy	3
	PTA 103, Therapeutic Massage	1
	PTA 108, Kinesiology Lab	1
	PTA 109, Kinesiology	1
	PTA 113, Pathophysiological Conditions 1	2
	PTA 104 Procedures Lab	1
	PTA 105, Procedures	2
	<b>Total</b>	18
<b>Spring</b>	BIO 212, Anatomy & Physiology 2	4
	PTA 106 Introduction to Clinical Education	1
	PTA 201, Physical Agents Lab	1
	PTA 202, Physical Agents	2
	PTA 114, Pathophysiological Conditions 2	2
	PTA 117, Therapeutic Exercise 1 Lab	1
	PTA 118, Therapeutic Exercise 1	2
	PTA 203, Neurology for Physical Therapist Assistant	2
	PTA 204, Clinical Anatomy 1 Lab	1
	PTA 205, Clinical Anatomy 1	1
	<b>Total</b>	17
<b>Summer</b>	PTA 111, Clinical Education Experience 1	3
	<b>Total</b>	3

YEAR 2		CREDITS
<b>Fall</b>	CMP104/146, Composition 2 Elective	3
	HUM-ELECTIVE, Humanities Elective(s)	3
	PSY 102, General Psychology	3
	PTA 212, Therapeutic Exercise 2 Lab	1
	PTA 213, Therapeutic Exercise 2	2
	PTA 214, Clinical Anatomy 2 Lab	1
	PTA 215, Clinical Anatomy 2	1
	PTA 220, Current Topics in Physical Therapy	3
	PTA 217 Pediatric Physical Therapy	1
	<b>Total</b>	18
<b>Spring</b>	PTA 206, Physical Therapist Assistant Seminar	1
	PTA 211, Clinical Education Experience 2	7
	PTA 210, Case Studies in Physical Therapy	2
	<b>Total</b>	10

**Part Time Curriculum Sequence (66 credits)**

YEAR 1		
		CREDITS
<b>Fall</b>	PTA103, Therapeutic Massage	1
	PTA108, Kinesiology Lab	1
	PTA109, Kinesiology	1
	CMP101, Composition 1	3
	BIO211, Anatomy & Physiology 1	4
	PTA115, Introduction to PT	3
<b>Total</b>		13
<b>Spring</b>	BIO 212, Anatomy & Physiology 2	4
	PTA 203, Neurology for Physical Therapist Assistant	2
	PTA 204, Clinical Anatomy 1 Lab	1
	PTA 205, Clinical Anatomy 1	1
	<b>Total</b>	8

YEAR 3		
		CREDITS
<b>Fall</b>	PTA214, Clinical Anatomy 2 Lab	1
	PTA215, Clinical Anatomy 2	1
	PTA212, Therapeutic Exercise 2 Lab	1
	PTA213, Therapeutic Exercise 2	2
	PTA220, Current Topics in Physical Therapy	3
	PTA 217 Pediatric Physical Therapy	1
	HUM Elective	3
	<b>Total</b>	12
<b>Spring</b>	PTA206, PTA Seminar	1
	PTA210, Case Studies in Physical Therapy	2
	PTA211, Clinical Education Experience 2	7
	<b>Total</b>	10

YEAR 2		
		CREDITS
<b>Fall</b>	CMP104/146, Composition 2 Elective	3
	PTA 113, Pathophysiological Conditions 1	2
	PTA104, PTA Procedures Lab	1
	PTA105, PTA Procedures	2
	PSY102, General Psychology	3
	<b>Total</b>	11
<b>Spring</b>	PTA114, Pathophysiological Conditions 2	2
	PTA 106 Introduction to Clin Ed	1
	PTA201, Physical Agents Lab	1
	PTA202, Physical Agents	2
	PTA117, Therapeutic Exercise 1 Lab	1
	PTA118, Therapeutic Exercise 1	2
<b>Total</b>		9
<b>Summer</b>	PTA 111, Clinical Education Experience 1	3
	<b>Total</b>	3

\*For PTA Program Course Descriptions, please refer to;

<https://northshore.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/college-catalog/credit-programs/programs-of-study/degrees/physical-therapist-assistant-pta/>



## PTA PROGRAM ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

1. Prior to entering the program, students will be required to complete all health immunization requirements as outlined on the Health Form that is sent to students upon acceptance to the program. Refer to **appendix K** & the following link for more details:  
<https://www.northshore.edu/academics/programs/pta/policies.html>
2. Students will adhere to each instructor's individual course/lab requirements as specified in the course syllabus. This includes but is not limited to attendance, tardiness, testing and practical exam policies.
3. Students will adhere to the program's Learning Contract (**see appendix A**) and professional behavior expectations in both academic and clinical settings.
4. Students will respect confidentiality with respect to other students and patients, during on campus courses, clinical observations, off-campus field trips and/or clinical experiences. Students with access to medical information of a patient or client should only do so as part of their clinical responsibilities and caseload. Students must not discuss any patient in public, which includes but is not limited to hospital elevators, stairways, cafeterias, and/or hallways.
5. Upon admission to the program, students will sign a PTA Program Technical Standards form indicating that student physical, tactile, visual, communication, auditory and cognitive skills are at a level necessary to assume the role of a Physical Therapist Assistant. Any change in ability to perform the technical standards during the semester must be brought to the attention of the Program Director. (see appendix B).
6. For each lab course, students will be required to provide the instructor with Informed **Consent/Release of Liability** to participate during lab prior to the second week of classes. (**see appendix C**).
7. During labs, students will be expected to participate not only in administering therapeutic techniques and electrical modalities, but also receiving them from the instructor and classmates. During labs, students will be asked to remove as much clothing as necessary to expose the body part/segment to be treated. Students will be expected to work with peers while practicing proper draping techniques for maintaining their partner's dignity.
8. Students will be required to maintain appropriate hygiene, practice standard precautions and wear appropriate athletic clothing during each lab in order to allow for palpation of various muscles and bony landmarks. As part of laboratory experience and practical exams, PTA students are required to fully participate in patient simulation scenarios designed to closely replicate the healthcare workforce environment, which will prepare students to perform required competencies and care for patients/clients. These scenarios are video recorded and viewed in debriefing sessions that allow for reflective learning, peer-to-peer learning, and evaluation by faculty/staff. In addition to human client actors used in simulation experiences, students are expected to respect and care for the high and low fidelity patient simulators as if they were live patients, as well as to respect their fellow classmates during scenarios and debriefing sessions.
9. Students are required to have health insurance while enrolled in in the PTA program.
10. In addition to the main campus library and computer labs, computers and a printer are also available in the lab for student use. All students are expected to abide by the College's Computer Use Policy (see College Catalog and NSCC Student Handbook).
11. Student data forms are to be completed by all PTA students. These forms are used for emergency contact information purposes. The form remains in the student's file and a duplicate copy may be sent to assigned clinical sites. It is the responsibility of students to notify the Program Director

regarding any changes in contact information. (see **appendix D**)

12. The PTA program requires that students use the college's online learning platform referred to as Blackboard. This requires basic computer skills and access to the internet. Students are expected to check their northshore.edu email accounts and Blackboard on a regular basis throughout the day.
13. In addition to clinical education experiences, PTA students may be required to participate in a variety of community-based service learning and civic engagement experiences, field trips and/or clinical observations which may be scheduled outside of class time.
14. Each student is expected to be prepared for class by completing the required assignments. Active participation during class is encouraged by engaging in discussion, asking questions, practicing skills, and sharing your ideas and experiences. Each student's input is important and necessary for a positive learning experience.
15. Students enrolled in the program are required to achieve a minimum of a grade of C (75%) or better, a Pass for Clinical Experience 1 and 2 and PTA 206 Seminar. Failure to achieve a minimum of a C or P in PTA classes will lead to dismissal from the program. Each student has the opportunity to apply for readmission to the program per the Health Professions Readmission Policy.
16. Student work may be shared with the program's accrediting body (CAPTE).
17. Paper tests and final exams will be returned to the students for review while in class and then collected by the instructor for the remainder of the course/semester. Students may request a time to meet with the instructor to review questions and answers.

## GENERAL CLINICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Students will adhere to the requirements, policies and procedures outlined in this handbook and the Clinical Education Handbook. The Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) will meet with students as a group and/or individually to review policies and procedures for clinical education in more detail during scheduled times throughout the academic year. Attendance is mandatory. Students who do not attend preparatory meetings scheduled by the ACCE may forfeit their clinical assignment.
2. Students must have proof of current American Heart Association certification in CPR at the Adult/Child level and complete and updated health records. Professional liability insurance will be provided to the student by the College's blanket policy.
3. Students must have achieved a grade of "C" (75) or better in all pre-requisite courses and be in compliance with required immunizations, background check, drug testing, CPR certification and dementia training certification (if applicable) in order to be eligible for clinical placement.
4. Students will pass two (2) clinical rotations (16 weeks), one of which must be an inpatient and outpatient rotation. Students who fail a clinical experience course must re-take the course during the next semester it is offered pending available placement and/or re-admission to the program.
5. Students are required to complete an average of **35-40** hours per week during the clinical rotation.
6. Students will be expected to be present during the working hours of the clinical instructor. Arrangements can be made between the student and the clinical instructor for changing the hours; however, the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) and the Center Coordinator for Clinical Education (CCCE) must approve the change prior to implementation of the changes.
7. Students will adhere to the general Clinical Attendance Policy.
8. All requests for time off during scheduled clinical hours must be approved by the ACCE before the request is submitted to the clinical instructor. The ACCE and/or clinical instructor have the authority to approve or deny any request for time off based on factors such as the clinical instructor's schedule, interruption of the overall learning process and continuity of patient care.
9. If the request for time off is accepted, students will be expected to make up the time at a time mutually convenient to the clinical instructor, the clinical site and the ACCE. Taking time off from clinical may result in receiving an IP or "In Progress" final grade until all clinical requirements are completed including submission of assignments and forms to the ACCE.
10. Students are expected to have a driver's license and reliable transportation to and from clinical. Traveling, **up to 60 miles** in each direction may be required. Students will be expected to sign a clinical waiver prior to the start of clinical (**see appendix E**).
11. Students are required to complete an in-service presentation to the clinical staff before the end of each clinical experience.
12. Under no circumstances is the student to contact a clinical affiliate/site regarding:
  - a.) possible placement.
  - b.) changing the time schedule.
  - c.) changing the assigned dates.

13. A clinical facility may request their own CORI/SORI, and/or drug screening analysis prior to the start of the clinical rotation in order to determine eligibility. Students may also be required to undergo and pass random drug screening analysis during clinical experience rotations. Students who fail to pass or refuse to submit a drug screening analysis will be ineligible for clinical placement and/or may be dismissed from the PTA program.
14. Clinical experience rotations within the school system or other types of specialized rotations may require fingerprinting prior to the beginning of the clinical experience.
15. Students who fail to submit clinical education forms and assignments on dates assigned by the ACCE may receive an IP (In Progress) final grade. An IP grade for the final/terminal 10-week clinical PTA 112 may result in a delay in ability to meet the licensure exam deadlines thus delaying the ability to become licensed and employed following completion of the program.
16. The program is not responsible for assigning clinical rotations outside the established dates within the academic year.
17. Students who fail or withdraw from Clinical Education Experience 1 or 2 (PTA 111 or PTA 211) will be subject to the Health Professions Program Readmission Policy.
18. In the event of inclement weather, an emergency or college closing due to holiday, students will adhere to the Health Professions Clinical Attendance policy.
19. Students will be expected to adhere to the clinic/hospital's policies and procedures, including adherence to the dress code and standard precautions. Students will be expected to wear their nametags, which identify them as PTA students from North Shore Community College. Students are also expected to arrive to clinical prepared and in professional attire/appropriate footwear.
20. For all off campus educational experiences, students will be responsible for the financial coverage of emergency services.

### **STUDENT ADVISEMENT**

Each PTA student is assigned a PTA faculty member as an academic advisor. If a student has been assigned to a non-PTA faculty advisor, please bring this to the attention of the Department Chair/Program Director and the error will be corrected.

The role of the advisor is to:

- Advise students on course selection and sequencing.
- Make referrals to Student Support services as needed.
- Develop an appropriate academic plan that is best suited to the student i.e. advising on how to manage course load successfully while taking into account other responsibilities such as part-time job, family, etc.
- Provide feedback on academic and clinical progression.
- Provide feedback regarding professionalism and level of progression regarding PTA Value Based Behaviors.

Office hours for the Department Chair/Program Director and core faculty members are posted outside office doors. If there a conflict with scheduling, please bring this to the attention of the faculty member so that an alternative meeting time may be determined.

## STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNTS

North Shore Community College students are offered student email accounts that can be accessed through "MyNorthshore." All PTA students are required to have a NSCC email account and internet access in order to engage in web supported courses within the PTA curriculum. Computers are available on campus for student use as needed. **Faculty will utilize student NSCC email accounts only for all email communications.**

Students are expected to check their NSCC email accounts on a daily basis during the academic year and three times per week when on breaks, including summer and winter intersessions. **Students are also expected to utilize their NSCC email accounts when communicating with faculty, clinical instructors and all others affiliated with the PTA Program.**

## BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BOARD EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

You will be communicating primarily via email and the discussion board with the facilitators and your peers. Here are some ground rules to make sure communication in our online classroom is effective and civil:

- It is easy for written communications to be misinterpreted since, unlike spoken words, they are not accompanied by additional cues such as voice tone or body language. Before you post or send something, re-read it to make sure it's as clear as possible.
- Do not post or send anything with profanity or that is demeaning or harassing.
- Never email or post in ALL CAPS. That means you are yelling at the person.

You are encouraged to debate, and this can include disagreeing with a point that someone is making. Be sure to do so, though, in a way that is polite. Do not be demeaning and do not personally attack another member of the class.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to promote the safety and privacy of students, faculty, staff, patients, college staff and visitors. Students and faculty members must comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) when using social media. No student may post, release, or otherwise disclose photos, identifiable case descriptions, images, or records related to the educational, clinical, or research activities of the school via social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and TikTok, SnapChat, WeChat etc.), non-educational blogs, message boards, Internet websites, personal e-mail, or anything other than standard professional means of query and/or dissemination. No student may post statements about North Shore Community College, Health Professions or the PTA program (faculty, staff, students, events/activities, visitors, patients or clients) that are defamatory, obscene, threatening or harassing. Failure to comply with this policy is a violation of legal, professional, and/or ethical obligations. Violation will result in disciplinary action by the PTA program up to and including dismissal from the program.

## CELL PHONE AND SMART WATCH POLICY

The policy of the PTA Program requires ALL students to adjust their cell phone and smart watches to "vibrate" or "silent" mode PRIOR to entering class and/ or clinical unless otherwise instructed by the faculty member to engage in a specific learning activity. If your cell phone/ smart watches don't have this

feature, you are required to turn your cell off while class or clinical is in session. If an instructor allocates time for a break, you may access/make calls during this time only.

Under NO circumstances should you be text messaging or using your cell phone/smart watch for some form of entertainment while in class or during clinical. Violations will result in a five (5) point deduction from your final grade and/ or subject to the Professional Behavior Policy. Violations during an examination, test or quiz will result in an automatic zero for that exam/test/quiz and may result in program dismissal.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WHO REQUIRE ACCOMODATIONS**

Students who anticipate the need for accommodations are encouraged to visit the website of Accessibility Services ([www.northshore.edu/accessibility](http://www.northshore.edu/accessibility)) and follow the outlined procedures at least four (4) weeks prior to the beginning of classes. Accessibility Services provides academic accommodations and services for students with disabilities so that they have equal access to programs and activities. Through collaboration, Accessibility Services works towards assisting students in maximizing their academic potential, while also promoting self-awareness, self-advocacy, and ultimately personal responsibility and independence.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

A student may withdraw from the PTA Program at any time. It is in the best interest of the student to consult with his or her academic advisor and the Department Chair/Program Director concerning the decision to withdraw. To officially withdraw from the program, a letter or email detailing the reasons why must be addressed to the Department Chair/Program Director and the withdrawal from program form must also be signed. (see **appendix H**) It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from all registered courses. Failure to withdraw from courses in a timely manner may lead to a final grade of F, which will impact academic standing and/ or financial aid status. Depending on the timing of a student's withdrawal, he/she/they may or may not be eligible for a refund. Please refer to the college's refund policy on the Student Financial Services web page.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE**

A student may officially withdraw from any full semester 15-week course before the twelfth (12) week of the semester and receive a "W" grade. A student should see his/her course instructor for advisement prior to withdrawing. Failure to officially withdraw from the class may result in an "F" grade, which may affect academic standing and financial aid. Withdrawal from any PTA course will result in an interruption of a student's curriculum sequence, which requires re-admission consideration to the PTA program. Please refer to the Division of Health Profession's readmission policy and PTA program process and procedures.

A student who wishes to change his/her curricular sequence from full time to part time may do so before the twelfth (12) week of the semester. This decision must be made during the fall semester, first year in the program only. In order to complete this process, the student will be required to meet with the Program Director/Dept Chair to briefly discuss reasons and complete the part time change of status form (see **appendix G**). Request to drop down to the part time program will not be accepted beyond the 12<sup>th</sup> week of fall classes, year 1.

## TRANSFER CREDIT

Students wishing to transfer credits from other accredited academic institutions must meet the requirements and follow the procedure outlined on the Registrar Office web page

[<https://www.northshore.edu/registrar/transfer-courses.html>]

Authorized staff within the Enrollment Center conducts the official review for transfer credit of the general education course requirements within the PTA curriculum [CMP101, CMP102-150, PSY102, PSY204, BIO211, BIO212, HUMANITIES Elective]. General education courses do not have a time limit for receiving transfer credit. However, students are expected to have a working knowledge of course content.

The PTA Department Chair conducts the official review of physical therapy coursework for transfer credit. Physical therapy courses have a 2-year time limit in order to be eligible for transfer credit. In addition to the official transcripts, students must submit course syllabi, course assignments and related course materials so that a careful and complete assessment of previous coursework can be performed to assure the PTA accreditation standards, student learning outcomes/competencies and requirements of applicable PTA courses are met.

## CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

Four of the seven general education courses in the PTA program are eligible for credit by examination, either through CLEP or through NSCC's Department Exams. These include CMP101, CMP102, PSY102 and PSY204. Please access the Center for Alternative Studies and Educational Testing (CAS) webpage for further information and email [cas@northshore.edu](mailto:cas@northshore.edu) for further information.

## APPLICATION TO GRADUATE

In order for a student to graduate, a graduation application form must be completed and submitted to Enrollment and Student Records the semester before scheduled graduation. Application to Graduate forms may be completed online at the following link: <https://www.northshore.edu/registrar/graduation.html>. Students must complete the form and submit it to Enrollment Office by the required deadline. After receiving the completed form, the Registrar will review the student's academic record and will respond to the student as to whether all courses required for graduation have been completed.

## ASSOCIATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for a degree, PTA students must have: earned at least 60 hours of credit with CQPA of 2.00 or higher; fulfilled all requirements designated in the applicable active program requirements; met the particular detailed career course and grading requirements in the curriculum selected; and met all other specific requirements set by the College. Active versions of the PTA Program of Study must be completed so that graduates are well prepared for successful entry-level practice as a Physical Therapist Assistant.

**For additional information, please refer to the College Catalogue and NSC Student Handbook.**

## TRANSFER AGREEMENTS/OPTIONS

There is the possibility for a graduate to transfer to a Bachelor's program in a related field such as Exercise Science, Exercise Physiology, and Public Health.

Currently an official transfer agreement exists between NSCC's PTA Program and the following institutions:

- UMass (Lowell): Exercise Physiology
- Regis College: Exercise Science and Public Health
- University of Southern New Hampshire
- Salem State University: Exercise Science/Exercise Physiology

## REQUIREMENTS FOR PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

In order to practice as a licensed physical therapist assistant, students will need to complete the following:

1. Successfully complete and graduate from an accredited Physical Therapist Assistant program.
2. The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy develops, maintains and administers the National Physical Therapy Examination for Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants. Prior to being eligible to register and take the national licensure exam which is offered four times a year by the Federation, graduates must first complete registration with the respective state in which they wish to practice.

Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT)  
509 Wythe Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
Phone: 703-299-3100  
Fax: 703-299-3110  
[www.fsbpt.org](http://www.fsbpt.org)

Massachusetts's licensure applications are processed by Professional Credential Services, Inc. (PCS), P. O. Box 198689, Nashville, TN 37219-8689. Information and applications can be accessed via the web at [www.pcshq.com](http://www.pcshq.com). Requests to PCS can be made by telephone at (877) 887-9727 or by email at [otlicense@pcshq.com](mailto:otlicense@pcshq.com). Licensure laws govern the practice of occupational therapy in Massachusetts and are overseen by the COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE - BOARD OF REGISTRATION IN ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, 1000 Washington Street, Suite 710, Boston, MA 02118-6100.

The board's phone number is (617) 701-8605. The website is <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/board-of-allied-health-professions> and email contact is [alliedhealth@mass.gov](mailto:alliedhealth@mass.gov)

The Massachusetts licensure application procedure involves completing the form and submitting a fee to PCS (current fees are posted within the application). For proof of completion of the PTA Program at NSCC, an official transcript must accompany the application and indicate the graduation date and the degree granted.



To practice as a PTA in other states, the graduating student should contact the appropriate licensing bureau within those states. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility for accessing information and completing all steps of the application process in the respective state where the student intends to practice.

It is strongly recommended that students take the Scorebuilders licensing exam review class (offered by NEPTAC or New England Physical Therapist Assistant Consortium) prior to graduation. Details regarding registration process, location, time and cost will be provided by the Program Director/Dept Chair.

### PTA PROGRAM ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is mandatory for all classes and labs as it is a measurement of student participation and ownership in the learning process. If a student must be absent from class due to an unforeseen circumstance, he or she must contact the instructor via phone or email at least one hour prior to the beginning of class. To be excused from class without points deducted from the final grade, the instructor must determine that the reason for the absence is reasonable. This may require formal documentation supporting the reason and need for being absent. (Example: MD note). In the event that the instructor is not contacted one hour prior to class and/or does not consider the circumstance reasonable and/or there is a lack of formal documentation as requested, then the absence will be considered unexcused. Each unexcused absence will lead to a five (5) point deduction from the final grade.

Each absence exceeding the first absence (excused or unexcused), will lead to a five (5)-point deduction from the final grade. In the event of special circumstances requiring extended absence from class, students should discuss his/her individual situation with the course instructor on a case-by-case basis. The *student* is expected to inform/discuss his/her situation with the course instructor for any such special circumstances and provide official documentation that the extended absence from class is necessary. Regardless of the reason for missing a class, the *student* is responsible for obtaining all missed handouts, lecture notes, and assignments from classmates.

### PTA PROGRAM CLINICAL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is mandatory for successful completion of Clinical Experience 1 and 2. **Students are allowed a total of 1 excused absence** from clinical education rotation/ experience. If a student is unable to attend clinical due to illness, the following steps need to be taken at least one hour prior to the beginning of the clinical day:

1. **Call the Academic Clinical Coordinator of Education (ACCE) at the College and inform him/her of your plan to be absent from clinical.** Absence from clinical for medical reasons may require formal documentation (ex. Physician's note) submitted to the ACCE and clinical instructor within 24 hours from the day of absence.
2. **Call and speak directly** with your clinical instructor regarding your need to be absent that day. This may require multiple calls in order to reach him/her prior to the beginning of the day. Leaving messages, voice mailing, or emailing are considered inadequate methods of communication.

Any absences exceeding the one excused absence missed from clinical must be made up. Lack of following the necessary steps regarding being excused from clinical will result in outcomes for non-compliance as part of the program's Professional Behavior Policy (please refer to PTA Student Handbook).

Making up time due to absence from clinical will result in a final grade of In Progress (IP) until the clinical attendance requirement and submission of all paperwork and forms is fully completed and accepted by the ACCE. Make up time must be arranged and coordinated with the clinical instructor and the student must notify the ACCE of the make-up time within 24 hours of the absence from clinical. Missed clinical time will be made up at a time that is convenient to the clinical instructor.

Note that an In Progress or IP final grade for the last clinical may result in delayed submission of required documentation to the state board which then may delay the student's ability to sit for the soonest national licensure exam day and time offered by the Federation of State Board of Physical Therapy.

In the event of special circumstances requiring extended absence from clinical, students should discuss his/her individual situation with the ACCE and a solution will be determined on a case by case basis.

### **PTA PROGRAM TARDINESS POLICY**

A student who is repeatedly late for class is considered unprofessional and disruptive to the teaching and student learning process. Each student will be allotted one (1) incidence of tardiness without any point deduction due to unforeseen circumstances. For each incidence of tardiness (i.e. failure to arrive class when it is scheduled to begin) beyond one (1) incidence of tardiness, 2 points will be deducted from the student's final grade and may be required to participate in a remedial action plan/learning contract per the program's Professional Behavior Policy.

### **PTA STUDENT RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

Student records containing relevant information pertaining to a student's admission, enrollment and achievement in the PTA Program will be maintained in a secure and confidential file. This record will be maintained for five (5) years after a student's program completion/graduation. After five years, the student's program file will be securely disposed. Students are advised to maintain their own copies of information/documentation within their student program files. Program files will include the following:

- Student Data Sheet
- Learning contract
- Informed Consent/ Release of Liability
- Academic Advising/Warning forms (if applicable)
- Action Plan Learning Contracts (if applicable)
- Readmission documents and Internal Readmission Form (if applicable)
- Clinical Education Waiver
- Summative Clinical Education Forms and Hours
- Fieldtrip Waiver
- Value Based Behaviors/Professionalism Assessments
- PTA Program and Clinical Education Handbook verification forms
- Documents maintained by Castle Branch
- Audio Visual Release Form
- Code of Conduct Acknowledgment Form
- Student Acknowledgement Handbook Form
- Basic Life Support Certification
- HIPAA and Standard Precautions Certifications

Official academic records are maintained by the Enrollment and Student Record Office. This academic record is the only permanent record guaranteed maintenance in perpetuity. In accordance with the provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), North Shore Community College has adopted the regulations to protect the privacy rights of its students. Written student consent is required before disclosing personally identifiable information to a third party.

### **FIELD TRIP AND CLINICAL OBSERVATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

In the interest of student safety, any faculty requesting students to participate in the observational experience must complete a “Field Trip Request” form including information such as: student name, purpose of the trip, destination, time departing and returning, name of accompanying faculty member if applicable and method of transportation. The request form must be forwarded to the Department Chair, Dean of Health Professions and Assistant Provost or respective approval at least two (2) weeks in advance of the observational experience. In addition, students are required to sign a field trip permission form.

The program ensures safety of the patients/clients prior to the clinical observation. This is achieved through a written letter of confirmation from the program’s ACCE to the Center Coordinator of Clinical Education. The letter identifies the student’s name and year enrolled in the PTA program. In addition, the letter confirms that the student has received information pertaining to HIPAA, patient confidentiality and standard precautions.

For all off campus educational experiences, students will be responsible for the cost of emergency medical services in the event of illness or injury.

### **CLINICAL/FIELDWORK CANCELLATION POLICY**

1. If mandatory college closing (classes cancelled) is required prior to the start of scheduled clinical/fieldwork, the student will not be required to attend clinical/fieldwork for the duration of the cancellation.
2. If mandatory college closing (classes cancelled) during the day/evening, after the student has arrived at clinical/fieldwork site, the student is required to complete assigned procedures prior to leaving the site. The student must ensure patient safety is not compromised and documentation is completed.
3. If mandatory college closing (classes cancelled) is required, the student may have to make up hours/time in order to fulfill program requirements (per program policy).
4. If classes are not cancelled, but there is questionable weather, the student will use their own discretion as to their ability to travel safely to and from clinical/fieldwork site. Should the student decide that travel is not prudent, they are to follow the program’s attendance policy regarding absence from clinical/fieldwork.
5. Students may attend clinical/fieldwork on holidays that are not typically observed by health care agencies (ex. Evacuation Day, College Professional Day, Patriot’s Day, and Bunker Hill Day) or any other day at the program’s discretion.
6. Students may access the college adverse weather/emergency closings by:
  - calling the college adverse weather hotline at (978) 762-4200
  - accessing the college website.
  - local television and radio stations.

### **PTA PROGRAM GRADING POLICY**

Students must pass all PTA coded courses with an average grade of “C” (75) or better or a “Pass” grade for PTA 111 and PTA 112 Clinical Education Experience 1 and 2 and PTA 206 Seminar. In the event of not achieving the C/75% minimum passing grade or “Pass”, students will be academically dismissed from the program. Students may apply for readmission to the program one time only (see Health Professions Readmission Policy and Procedures).

PTA program faculty are responsible for determining and maintaining academic standards established by the College and program. The program faculty is also responsible for maintaining compliance with accreditation policies and procedures. The following represents grading categories for the PTA program:

<b>A</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>(93-100)</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>(90-92)</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>(87-89)</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>(83-86)</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>(80-82)</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>(77-79)</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>(75-76)</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>(70-74)</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>(67-69)</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>(63-66)</b>
<b>D-</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>(60-62)</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Below 60</b>

### **ACADEMIC STANDING POLICY**

#### **Criteria for Good Academic Standing and Satisfactory Progress**

To be considered in good academic standing and to be making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or certificate, a matriculated student must:

1. Maintain a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 2.0 OR ABOVE, AND
2. Successfully earn 67% of credits attempted each semester. (Credits attempted are defined as credits enrolled at the end of the Add-Drop period).

Please note: The criteria for maintaining financial aid eligibility are different. Please refer to the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress policy in the NSCC Student Handbook for further information.

#### **Academic Probation**

A student who does not meet the above standards of a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 2.0 or above and successfully earn 67% of credits attempted at the end of a semester will be placed on academic probation and will receive an email letter of notification.

Academic Probation directs a student to meet with an advisor to review the student’s academic progress and to discuss use of the College’s student support services in order to improve academic performance.

### **Academic Suspension**

A student who does not meet the above requirements of a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 2.0 or above and successfully earn 67% of credits attempted for two consecutive semesters will be placed on academic suspension. Suspension means that a student is prohibited from enrolling in the College until he/she has appealed their suspension to the Academic Review Board to discuss academic progress and to receive conditional permission to re-enroll. The Academic Review Board may make re-enrollment contingent on a student taking specific steps to help ensure future academic success. A student must fulfill all requirements set by the board.

### **Academic Review Board**

A suspended student must attend an Academic Appeal Review session in person in order to receive permission to re-enroll. The College recognizes that special or unusual circumstances can affect academic performance. These mitigating circumstances will be considered by the Review Board in granting a student permission to re-enroll. Therefore, a student is required to complete an application to appeal their suspension and provide a written statement explaining any important information the Board should know before making its decision. The composition of Review Boards will be determined by the Assistant Provost. Students will be notified of the Academic Review Board's decision via email. In addition, if the student wishes to appeal this decision, they may do so through the Office of the Assistant Provost.

### **Academic Warning System: Early and Mid-Term Alerts**

By the third week of the semester and again by mid-term faculty will report students who are not attending class and/or are having academic difficulty. Faculty may also submit on-line alerts at any point in the semester for students having difficulty in their classes. Students and their Academic Advisors registered for 15-week classes will be notified via email of early and mid-term alert reports and will be advised to take appropriate action.

## **PTA PROGRAM QUIZ/TEST/EXAM POLICY**

If a student is unable to take a scheduled quiz, test/exam due to unforeseen reasons such as illness and/or family emergency, the student is to contact the instructor prior to the start of class where the quiz, test or exam will be taking place. If the instructor views the excuse as reasonable {the instructor may require official documentation such as an MD note}, arrangements will be made for a make-up test/exam on the following day of classes regardless of whether the student has an on-campus class or not. For each day missed following the scheduled test/exam make up day, 10-points will be deducted from the make-up test/exam grade. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor regarding the make-up test time and place.

If the student is absent the day of the test/exam and has failed to contact the instructor prior to the beginning of the class where the quiz, test and exam will be taking place, then the student will be given a zero (0) and will not have an opportunity to make up the test/exam.

Online tests must be completed during the activation period for which the test is set. Online tests not completed and submitted within the activation period will result in a zero.

All students are expected to abide by the academic honesty policies of the college. Dishonest academic behavior includes, but is not limited to, cheating and plagiarism. All electronic devices such as cell phones, smart watches in addition to books, papers, bags must be cleared and removed from the testing area,

### PTA PROGRAM PRACTICAL EXAM POLICY.

Students who fail a practical exam (less than 75%) must repeat the practical on a date determined by the instructor. The date of the repeat practical is determined after the instructor has had the opportunity/ time to grade the practical, the student has received feedback from the instructor and sufficient time to practice and remediate. The objective of the repeat practical is to ensure that the student is able to demonstrate safety and competency in the physical therapy skills being evaluated. The highest grade that a student can achieve on a make-up practical exam is a 75%. A practical may only be repeated one time per semester.

In order to be eligible and prepared to take scheduled practical exams, students must fulfill the skill/ competency check off requirement for each respective PTA lab course, which will be determined/established by the instructor. Failure to complete the lab check off/competency requirement by the established lab practical time and date may lead to a ten-point deduction from the lab practical grade.

### SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

All assignments and papers are to be submitted in the exact format required by the instructor (hard copy at the beginning of class or electronic submission) and by the established due date and time. The faculty understands that there can be extenuating circumstances that cause the student to be unable to submit work on time. For each day that the assignment is submitted late (by 8:30 am the following day from the assigned due date), 25% will be deducted from the final grade achieved on the assignment or paper. For example, one day late =25% off assignment/paper grade; 2 days late =50% off assignment/ paper grade. If the student submits the assignment late beyond the second day from the established due date, the student will receive a zero for the assignment. All late submissions must be received in the format requested by the instructor by 8:30 am the following day. If the submission is received later than 8:30 am, the deduction will be counted as an extra day point deduction.

### ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Members of the North Shore Community College community are expected to act within the standards of academic honesty. Any willfully dishonest behavior is subject to disciplinary action, which may range from that which the instructor imposes relative to the specific course to dismissal from the College, depending on the seriousness of the act.

Dishonest academic behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- **Cheating:** Use of unauthorized notes during an examination; giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on an examination; copying from someone else's examination, term paper, homework, or report; theft of examination materials; falsification of works or records.
- **Plagiarism:** - Using the words, data or ideas of another, as one's own, without properly acknowledging their source. It is important that you give credit to all the sources that you use in writing about literature. Students must be particularly vigilant when working online, as the ease with which outside sources can be accessed tends to make one forget they must be documented.

In addition to action taken relative to the specific course, the course instructor may bring any matter related to academic honesty to the Assistant Provost for further disciplinary action. The Assistant Provost will review the case and determine if further action is to be taken.

Disciplinary action may be appealed by the affected student/s. A full description of the student grievance process is available through the office of the Provost or the NSCC Student Handbook.

### **On the use of ChatGPT and other Modern Language Generators (MLGs)**

MLGs such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Bing Chat or Bard can help students with various tasks, such as finding summarized answers, getting creative inspiration, and generating content. However, MLGs are not a **substitute** for human learning and creativity. Students should use ChatGPT as a tool to enhance skills and knowledge, not to replace them (“the ethically and responsible use of ChatGPT in class”).

If you use ChatGPT or any other MLGs for class assignments, you must follow the Academic Honesty policy (above). You should not copy or plagiarize the content generated by any MLG. You may use it as a reference or a starting point for your own work. Students must cite correctly following the APA style according to the rules and examples provided in the course page in Blackboard.

**Cited work:** “The ethical and responsible use of ChatGPT in class” prompt. Microsoft Bing Chat, August 25, 2023, Bing.com.

## **ACADEMIC GRADE APPEAL POLICY**

An academic failure is defined as a grade below 75% on the final grade of a PTA course. If a student fails to meet academic performance standards, the student should refer to the student grievance procedure (Massachusetts Community Colleges) described in the NSCC Student Handbook. Students should see their academic advisor prior to completing the PTA Program Grade Appeal Form (**appendix I**). Appeals should be submitted within five (5) working days of notification of failure.

## **CLINICAL GRADE APPEAL POLICY**

An academic failure is defined as a grade below 75% on the clinical evaluation rubric as outlined in the Clinical Education Handbook.

If a clinical instructor determines that a student fails to meet clinical competencies, the student should see the ACCE and may request a conference with the Department Chairperson prior to the student completing and filing Part I of the PTA Program Grade Appeal Form (**appendix I**) within five (5) working days of notification of failure.

## **HEALTH PROFESSIONS RE-ADMISSION POLICY**

The following students (full- or part-time) must apply for re-admission prior to registration:

1. Students who have formally withdrawn from the College.
2. Students who have not been enrolled at the College within the previous five (5) years.
3. Students who have graduated from the College.
4. Students in selective admissions programs \*who have interrupted their sequence of professional courses.

\*(Nurse Education, **Physical Therapist Assistant**, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Radiologic Technology, Respiratory Care, Early Childhood Education, Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation, Substance Abuse Counseling)

**Students in the Health Professions degree programs seeking re-admission must meet current admission requirements, and if re-admitted, are permitted only one re-admission to their program**

and on a space available basis.

## PROCEDURE FOR INTERNAL READMISSION TO THE PTA PROGRAM

In accordance with the Health Professions readmission policy, all matriculated students have one opportunity to be readmitted to the PTA Program. Formal readmission to the PTA Program is needed for any matriculated student who has interrupted his/her sequence of courses as designed in the option of study for which he/she initially enrolled (part-time or full-time) due to any of the following:

- course failure.
- course withdrawal (\*except for students who requests to drop down from the full-time program to the part time program before the 12th week of the fall semester, year 1 of the program as this does not interrupt course sequencing).
- semester stop out.

The formal readmission process and procedures require the student to initiate and complete the following steps:

1. Communicate with the PTA Program Director/Department Chair within 10 days of a course withdrawal and/or failure.
2. Submit a general NSCC application and detailed personal statement/essay addressing specific changes he/she will make and/or have made to enhance academic success if readmitted to the PTA Program. The personal statement and NSCC application will be due by a date established by the Program Director/ Dept Chair.
3. Participate in an interview with the PTA Department Chair and one program faculty member to further discuss factors which contributed to course failure and plans for academic success should the student be readmitted to the program.
4. Meet with the Program Director regarding readmission decision and discuss action plan (if applicable) outlining performance expectations and curricular sequencing upon readmission to the program- see below.

Sign and submit the PTA Program Internal Readmission Form to Enrollment Services. **(appendix F)** Decisions regarding readmission to the program will be based on academic and clinical performance, personal circumstances, documented plan for future success and space availability. Students who are re-admitted to the program must meet current program requirements. This includes {but not limited to} updated health immunization forms and technical standards for participation in academic and clinical education.

In the event of re-acceptance to the PTA program, the student will be required to adhere and sign off on the conditions and requirements for readmission to the program. This may include (but is not limited to) repeating and/ or auditing certain classes (in addition to the class failed) determined to be appropriate by the Dept Chair and program faculty. This ensures that students readmitted to the program have the opportunity to successfully learn the content and physical therapy skills per the recommended curricular sequencing and that the student remains current prior to clinical placement.

Students seeking readmission to the program who have stopped out of the program for greater than one semester will be required to formally apply to the program through Enrollment Services for fall admission consideration. Decision for re-admission will be consistent with all other program applicant admission



criteria and expectations for the year, which the student is applying to the program. The requirements for the year that the student is applying is outlined in the PTA application packet.

Students who have utilized their one opportunity for readmission (either internal or formally through Enrollment Services) will be dismissed from the PTA program upon subsequent failure to comply with program policies and standards of performance or subsequent interruption in curriculum sequence including course failure, course withdrawal and/or stop out from the program.

## PTA PROGRAM PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR POLICY

In preparation for a career in the health profession, students are expected to behave in a responsible and professional manner in the classroom as well as in the clinical setting. Members of the faculty have determined the following to be standards of acceptable behavior for students in the academic and clinical components of the Physical Therapist Assistant program.

### **In the classroom setting, students are expected to:**

1. Use tact and courteous behavior towards faculty and peers and demonstrate initiative in the learning process.
2. Follow directions and complete assigned tasks.
3. Respect the classroom as a place of learning and avoid disruption of the learning process by not doing/engaging in the following:
  - Making comments unrelated to the subject matter.
  - Engaging in unnecessary conversation during class.
  - Leaving the classroom repeatedly without permission.
  - Entering the classroom after class has begun without permission of the instructor.
  - Videotaping/recording the class.
  - Audio taping/recording the class without permission from the instructor.
  - Using cell phones/smartphones/smart watches and/or other electronic handheld devices during class for engaging in text communication, searching the internet, Facebook (or any other social media) and/or tweeting unless directed by the course instructor.
4. Show respect for differences that exist in others. North Shore Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, religion, disability or sexual preference. We expect our students to act in the same manner as the College they represent.
5. Display the ability to work independently or collaboratively with peers and the faculty.
6. Notify instructors prior to absences or tardiness.
7. Attend classes on a regular and consistent basis. Repeated absence is considered unprofessional and will result in a lowering of grades. Refer to the program's attendance policy described in each course syllabus and this student handbook.
8. Take responsibility for seeking prior approval from the faculty for borrowing items from the program and for returning them in a timely fashion. Borrowed equipment and/or literature must be signed out and returned.
9. Properly maintain classrooms and laboratory areas by returning supplies and equipment to designated areas.
10. Adhere to APTA PTA value-based behaviors and APTA standards of ethical conduct.
11. Adhere to the PTA Program Learning Contract (**see appendix A**).

**In the clinical setting, students are expected to:**

- Be punctual, dependable and adhere to scheduled assignments.
- Wear appropriate professional attire/maintain appropriate hygiene.
- Adhere to APTA Standards of Ethical Conduct and PTA Value Based Behaviors.
- Show respect for others (clients/patients, family members of the patient, peers, clinical instructors, members of the interdisciplinary team).
- Treat patients in a manner that reflects dignity, respect and value for human life.
- Maintain confidentiality and use discretion when conversing with and in front of patients.
- Demonstrate initiative and accept responsibility for learning.
- Demonstrate active listening.
- Accept feedback and respond in a manner that reflects an understanding of the feedback received.
- Express a positive attitude, which reflects cooperation and flexibility.
- Maintain balance between personal and professional relationships with patients and staff.
- Refrain from the use of cell phones, smart watches and/or other electronic devices during clinical including (but not limited to) texting, tweeting, Facebooking, searching the internet.

**OUTCOMES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE OF PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR POLICY**

**Incidents of non-compliance in the classroom or clinical setting will be handled by the program as follows:**

- Upon the **first incident**, the faculty member who observes the behavior will give the student a verbal warning and report the incident to the Program Director and/or Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education. The faculty member involved will give an explanation of the reasons for this warning to the student and complete the professional behavior warning form (see **appendix L**)
- If a **second incident** occurs, a meeting with the Program Director and the faculty member will be scheduled. During the meeting, the student will receive a learning contract, which will outline specific expectations towards demonstration of professional behavior. A copy of the learning contract will be forwarded to the Dean of Health Professions and maintained in the student's file.
- If a **third incident** occurs and the student fails to demonstrate compliance with the action plan, he or she will be dismissed from the PTA program.

**Student Assessment of Professional Behavior (based on APTA PTA Value Based Behaviors)  
Policies and Procedures**

**Policy:**

Value based behaviors have been established by the American Physical Therapy Association as required skills, behaviors and attributes for PTA's. The PTA program at NSCC is committed to promoting these values in our students. A student who does not demonstrate an appropriate level of skill in these areas cannot progress through the program and will be advised on the appropriate course of action which will be either remediation and/or withdrawal from the program.

The 8 value-based behaviors include: **Accountability, Altruism, Compassion/Caring, Integrity, Duty, Social Responsibility, Responsibility, PT/PTA collaboration.**

Example behaviors for each of the values are as follows:

**Accountability**

- Seeks and responds to feedback.
- Acknowledges and accepts consequences for actions.
- Meets deadlines, including being on time for class.
- Attends classes/labs.
- Adheres to code of ethics and policies/procedures.

**Altruism**

- Assists classmates.
- Assists faculty/program chair/staff.
- Participates in program and/or college sponsored events.

**Compassion/Caring**

- Demonstrates understanding of socio-cultural influences on patient care.
- Considers individual differences when interacting with others.
- Advocates for the needs of others.

**Integrity**

- Maintains academic honesty.
- Is trustworthy.
- Recognizes own limits and acts accordingly.
- Resolves dilemmas/problems in a respectful manner.
- Contributes to a positive academic environment.

**Duty**

- Demonstrates safe practice.
- Maintains confidentiality.
- Shows commitment to learning.
- Demonstrates effective documentation and written communication.
- Maintains appropriate and effective professional relationships.
- Demonstrates flexibility and is adaptable to change.

**Social Responsibility**

- Participates in volunteer activities.
- Promotes cultural competence.
- Promotes health/wellness.

**Responsibility**

- Is prepared for class/lab activities.
- Actively engages in class/lab activities.
- Submits work that shows effort and care.
- Seeks out opportunities to enhance knowledge.
- Integrates concepts from other courses.
- Demonstrates a tolerance for ambiguity.
- Takes initiative to learn and seek out additional resources.

### **PT/PTA collaboration**

Demonstrates understanding and appreciation for the roles of the PT and PTA.

### **Procedures for Professional Behavior Assessment**

1. The instructor will formally assess each student on his/her professional behavior in each course at mid-term and final.
2. The student's advisor will review each course assessment with the student. Any discrepancies and/or problematic areas will be discussed and an action plan to remediate areas of concern will be developed. The Program Director will be notified of problematic areas and the student's remedial action plan.
3. Students must meet the following minimum criteria in order to progress through the program:

#### **By the end of the first semester:**

- Performs at a **developing** level in: *accountability, integrity, responsibility.*
- Performs at a **beginning** level in: *altruism, compassion/caring, duty, social responsibility, PT/ PTA collaboration.*

#### **By the end of the second semester and before attending first clinical experience:**

- Performs at a **developing** level in: *accountability, integrity, responsibility, altruism, compassion/caring, duty, PT/PTA collaboration.*
- Performs at a **beginning** level in: *social responsibility.*

#### **By the end of the third semester and before attending second year (final) clinical experiences:**

- Performs at an **entry** level in: *accountability, integrity, responsibility, altruism, compassion/caring, duty, PT/ PTA collaboration.*
- Performs at a **developing** level in: *social responsibility.*

#### **By the end of the fourth semester:**

- Performs at an **entry level** in all *value-based behaviors.*

**Students who are not meeting these standards will be required to participate in a remedial action plan so that they may improve in these areas.**

### **Operational Definitions for Core/Professional Values Assessment**

- **Red flag:** Student is performing at an unacceptable level.
- **Beginning level:** Student is able to identify the parameters of the core values and demonstrates understanding of the importance of these values being implemented into practice. Student demonstrates efforts to implement the core values with assistance.
- **Developing level:** Student is able to implement core values into their set of skills and behaviors on a regular basis although may require occasional support and/or feedback.
- **Entry level:** Student consistently implements core values into their set of skills and behaviors. He/she demonstrates an awareness of the value and importance of these values and seeks ways to improve performance in all areas of clinical practice.

## PROGRAM GRIEVANCE AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

A grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction about something or someone that is the cause or subject of protest. The PTA program supports the “Student Grievance Procedure” published in the North Shore Community College Students Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. Prior to filing formal grievance, students are encouraged to first:

1. Discuss the matter or concern with the appropriate faculty member. Most circumstances that arise can be and should be addressed with the instructor who is directly involved. Rarely will situations occur that require more than an open and professional discussion between the student and his/her instructor.
2. If the matter is not resolved through discussion with the instructor, the student should schedule a meeting with the Department Chairperson within two (2) working days.
3. If the matter cannot be resolved by the parties, the student should file a written grievance following the Student Grievance Procedure in the Student Rights, Responsibilities and Policies Handbook  
<https://northshore.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/college-catalog/student-handbook/>.

If the Program Director/Dept Chair and/or another member of the faculty is contacted before any discussion is had with the instructor, then the student will be referred back to the instructor for the appropriate discussion/resolution.

## POLICY ON COMPLAINTS (OUTSIDE OF DUE PROCESS)

Complaints which fall outside of due process will be handled on an individual or case by case basis. Upon receiving an informal or written complaint, the Program Director/Dept Chair will assimilate the information presented and respond accordingly depending upon the nature of the complaint. With respect to employers of graduates and/or the general public, the Program Director/Dept Chair may seek consultation from the program’s Advisory Board and/or the Dean of Health Professions and/or the Assistant Provost.

All complaint records will be maintained and held in a locked file cabinet located in the office of the Program Director/Dept Chair.

Information regarding filing a complaint with CAPTE (Commission on Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education) regarding the program or CAPTE may be found at <http://www.capteonline.org/Complaints/> or by contacting the Accreditation Department at [accreditation@apta.org](mailto:accreditation@apta.org) or by calling (703) 706-3245.

For additional information on formal student grievance procedures, please refer to the NSCC Student Handbook.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR PTA PROGRAM

### Dean of Health Professions

Lori Vinci  
HPSS- Ext 4467

#### Department Chair/Professor

Diane Caruso  
HPSS- Ext 4165

#### Professor

Micahel Fritz  
HPSS- Ext 4175

#### ACCE

HPSS-Ext 4169

#### Adjunct/Associated Faculty

Paul McGovern  
Kaitlyn Brown  
Michelle Carson

## CAMPUS SAFETY

The Campus Police and Public Safety Department coordinates campus safety and security in response to medical emergencies, fire/fire alarm emergencies, public safety emergencies and environmental emergencies.

Students are directed to the Campus and Public Safety web page for further information related to emergency situations and procedures for campus evacuation. [www.northshore.edu/safety](http://www.northshore.edu/safety)

In the wake of recent campus shootings across the nation, the college has added an Emergency Number to report potentially violent situations. This emergency number is (781) 477-2100 and students should program this number into their cell phone. Emergency extension 6222 is the College's version of 911 and can be accessed from any college phone. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to enroll in the college's Emergency Messaging System to be notified of campus emergencies. Students can enroll in this system within the Emergency Notification System app in MyNorthshore.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR SAFETY IN THE PHYSICAL THERAPY LAB**

1. Students may not use any electrical equipment/modality unless there is a PT faculty member present.
2. The Program Director/Dept Chair is responsible for scheduling time and date for an external vendor to perform critical safety checks and calibration on all laboratory equipment. Any laboratory equipment that is deemed to be malfunctioning and/or unsafe by the inspector will be removed from the lab and student use until it is repaired and/or replaced accordingly.
3. Items are not to be removed from the PTA lab unless permission is obtained from a program faculty member or the Program Director/Dept Chair. All materials and equipment utilized in the lab must be returned to its place and properly stored in either the cabinets or the lab equipment room.
4. Students must sign an informed consent/release of liability form before using any modality.
5. Students must inform the lab instructor of any change in their physical condition when assuming the role of either subject or therapist.
6. Students must get permission from the Program Director before using the lab after regular class hours and/or open lab hours.
7. Students have access to first aid kit in the lab for minor injuries. In all other cases of injury and/or emergencies, college campus safety rules must be followed. Campus Police may be contacted by calling extension **6222** from any college phone or **781- 477 -2100** from any college phone or cell phone.
8. In the event of being stuck by a needle or other sharp, blood or other potentially infectious materials in the eyes, nose or exposed skin:
  - Immediately flood the exposed area with water and clean any wound with soap and water.
  - Report the incident immediately to a PTA program faculty member.
  - Seek immediate medical attention from your primary care physician.

## **TRANSFER AGREEMENTS/OPTIONS**

There is the possibility for a graduate to transfer to a Bachelor's program in a related field such as Exercise Science, Exercise Physiology, and Public Health.

Currently an official transfer agreement exists between NSCC's PTA Program and the following institutions:

- UMass (Lowell): Exercise Physiology
- Regis College: Exercise Science and Public Health
- University of Southern New Hampshire
- Salem State University: Exercise Science

## **STUDENT PTA CLUB**

All PTA students are considered members of the Student PTA club and are strongly encouraged to participate in fundraising activities and sharing knowledge and advancement of the profession with NSCC students and faculty. A PTA faculty or staff member serves as the club advisor and students elect officers and plan activities. Student participation demonstrates a commitment to developing leadership skills, which is a requirement of the PTA program.



## PTA STUDENT MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The PTA program has developed a mentor-mentee program for all incoming students with an opportunity to connect with a mentor from the upper-class. The purpose of the program is for mentors to provide support and advice to mentees regarding general information about the program, course work, study strategies and how to create a balance between school and life outside of the classroom.

Both the mentor and the mentee will receive an email with contact information. Our expectation is that you set a time that works with each of your schedules to connect (weekly or every other week). The meeting time varies based upon your needs.

General Guidelines for a Successful Mentoring Relationship at the first meeting may include; beginning with an introduction to share some information about yourself and setting guidelines and expectations for the mentoring relationship at the first meeting (meeting time, how often and best way to communicate).

Attached are general guidelines from the APTA to assist in fostering a successful experience for both the mentor and mentee.

### Mentor - Mentee Expectations

Mentee Expectations	Mentor Expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set aside time for your mentoring commitment, but also be respectful of your mentor's time.</li> <li>Set expectations and an agreement for communication and meetings from the beginning. Honor the agreement.</li> <li>Be open and honest with your mentor, what do you want to learn/work on? How can your mentor support you and help you grow?</li> <li>Be open minded and prepared to consider new viewpoints.</li> <li>Remember you volunteered, get most of the year and reach out with questions or need for support.</li> <li>Thank your mentor when appropriate, they also have volunteered their time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set aside adequate time for mentor commitment.</li> <li>Set expectations and an agreement from the beginning to be respectful of everyone's time and be available within the agreement.</li> <li>Set goals with the mentee for the relationship.</li> <li>Approach meetings prepared and ready to listen to prior to offering advice or responding.</li> <li>Be encouraging and supportive, while helping the mentee identify needs and grow.</li> <li>Share your background and previous experiences so that the mentee can understand where you are coming from.</li> <li>Be open to potential new ideas and/or views and try to minimize personal bias.</li> <li>Remember you are a role model in this relationship, and act accordingly.</li> <li>Consider the confidentiality of the relationship, and follow-up on all promised commitments.</li> <li>Stay engaged throughout the year.</li> </ul>

### **Health Professions Dismissal and Appeal Policy**

A student in any health profession program at NSCC can be dismissed from their program for failing to follow or maintain the program's policies. The program reserves the right to institute the dismissal process for any of the following but not limited to:

1. Violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.
2. Violation of the testing policy or procedures.
3. Unsafe clinical performance (i.e., serious errors potentially affecting the patient's safety).
4. Inappropriate behavior
5. Inability to meet compliance standards for clinical placement (immunizations, background checks and drug screening).
6. Unprofessional behavior.
7. Clinical absence that is a no show, no call.
8. Failure to follow HIPAA guidelines.

Once a faculty member has identified a student's program/policy violations, the following will occur:

1. The faculty member recommending dismissal, will present their complaint to the Department Chair to initiate the process, at the Chair's discretion (i.e. provide notice to the student and convene a committee meeting).
2. If unsafe clinical performance or unprofessional behavior are identified in the complaint, the student may be suspended from clinical and/or classroom activities pending the investigation (program director/clinical instructor investigation).
3. The student will be notified in writing of the reason(s) for dismissal as alleged in the complaint; and, will be notified of the date, location, and committee members (to the extent they are known at the time) 48 hours prior to the committee convening for the meeting.
4. Department Chair and at least one faculty member from the program and another NSCC faculty will convene (the "committee") within 5 working days from the date of the filing of the complaint. The student may partake in the committee meeting to clarify any circumstances and have a non-speaking advocate present per College policy in attendance.
5. The committee will review the circumstances and make a determination by majority vote, on or after the committee meeting. The standard of review will be by a preponderance of the evidence (greater than 50 percent).

If a student is (to be) dismissed from the program the student will be notified in writing within five working days of the date of the decision.

A summary of the findings will be prepared by the Department Chair and made part of the student's record.

### **Dismissal Appeal Policy and Process**

A student has the right to appeal their dismissal by completing the appeal form. If a student chooses to file an appeal with the form, they must notify the Department Chair and the Dean of Health Professions, within five working days from the date of receipt of the committee's decision.

The Dean of Health Professions will meet with the student to review and discuss the written grievance and may also speak with faculty members and the Department Chair. The Dean will render their determination in writing to the student within five working days of the meeting.

If the dismissal is upheld, the student has the right to appeal to the Assistant Provost. The student will use the appeal form to notify the Dean and the Assistant Provost within five working days, upon receipt of the Dean decision, of their intent to appeal their dismissal.

The Assistant Provost will convene a meeting with the student and may also speak with faculty members, the Department Chair and the Dean. A decision will be made and the student will be notified within five working days of the meeting. The Assistant Provost's decision will be final and the final step in the process.

## PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK

### Appendix A

#### Learning Contract

(Between the **Physical Therapist Assistant Program** and the **students who are enrolled in the program.**)

A positive attitude toward the learning environment will help you to be successful. This contract includes the student behaviors that the PTA faculty considers important to achieve the goal of demonstrating positive behaviors and attitudes in the classroom, which will contribute to lifelong learning.

- Assignments are clearly designated in the course syllabus. I agree to prepare myself for class by completing the assigned readings and all other assignments on time by the due date established by the professor.
- Missed classes are time that is lost. There is no way to recreate the discussion and there is no guarantee that there will be opportunities to revisit topics covered during a future class. I understand that it is my responsibility for obtaining any material and assignments I missed from a classmate.
- Tardiness and missed class time affect all students and interruptions of any kind disrupt the learning process. I agree to arrive on time for class/clinical experiences and remain in class/clinical until the session is over and I am dismissed. I agree to refrain from unnecessary and unrelated conversation with my peers while the professor or clinical instructor is teaching and/or reviewing pertinent material.
- I will make an effort to learn about my classmates and be sensitive to cultural values and diversity especially with regard to expression of ideas and feelings that may differ from mine.
- I will display a positive and respectful attitude toward my peers, PTA faculty and the learning environment. I agree to fully participate in class discussion in order to contribute to the learning process.
- I understand that my work will be evaluated constructively and that specific suggestions will be made by the professor to assist my learning to become a competent professional. I will welcome new ideas and approaches to learning and demonstrate flexibility and willingness to consider them.
- I will arrange meetings with the professor in advance and at mutually convenient times. I understand that the professor will post office hours and I will respect the need to notify the professor in advance if I need to meet outside of his/her posted office hours.
- The use of cell phones/smartphones or other handheld electronic devices during class is disruptive to the learning environment. I agree to silence my device during class and not engage in texting, searching the internet, Facebook (or other social media) or tweeting during class. Cell phones, smartphones and other electronic devices will not be permitted when students are taking a quiz, test, and/or exam (written and practical).
- I understand that I am not permitted to tape and/or videotape the professor during lecture or lab unless I have formal documentation of these accommodations from Accessibility Services.
- Disruptive behavior of any type takes away from the learning process. If I demonstrate such behavior, I understand that I will be subject to the program's Professional Behavior Policy which could result in dismissal from the program.

---

Student signature

Date

# PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK

## Appendix B



### 2024-2025 TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM

**To the Student:** As you complete this form please consider your physical and mental/attitudinal ability to perform the Technical Standards associated with the health professions program that you are about to enter. Please carefully consider the expected Performance Level in this program as you evaluate your performance.

**General Job Description:** Physical Therapists Assistants, or PTAs, are technically educated health care professionals who work under the supervision of Physical Therapists in the provision of physical therapy services. Physical Therapist Assistants work in hospitals, private physical therapy practices, community health centers, corporate or industrial health centers, sports facilities, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, home health agencies, schools and pediatric centers. They require strong interpersonal and problem-solving skills which are crucial to planning effective treatment plans.

Throughout the performance of your duties as a healthcare provider, you will be exposed to infectious diseases in all practice settings. Although you will learn practices and procedures to minimize the risk of exposure, you should be aware of the risk and take it into consideration when deciding to enter this program and profession.

PHYSICAL STANDARDS		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
LIFT:	patients, equipment - up to 35 lbs	F
CARRY:	equipment, objects - 25 lbs. minimum	F
KNEEL:	to perform CPR, work with patients on mat; assist patients who fall	O
STOOP/BEND /TWIST:	to adjust wheelchairs, assist in ADL; perform transfers	F
BALANCE:	safely maintain while assisting patients in ambulation, transfer and balance techniques	C
CRAWL:	to work on mat with patients	F
REACH:	to adjust equipment, to guard patient, to reach supplies	C
HANDLE:	equipment such as prosthetics, orthotics, walkers, canes, crutches, weights, modalities	C
DEXTERITY:	manipulate and fine tune knobs, dials, goniometers, blood pressure cuffs, tools, equipment hardware	C
PUSH/PULL:	wheelchairs, stretchers, patients, Hoyer lifts	C
WALK:	a distance of at least 2 miles during a normal work day	C
STAND:	for periods of at least 2 hours	C

**PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK**

<b>TACTILE STANDARDS</b>		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
PALPATE:	pulses, spasticity, muscle contractions, bony landmarks, end-feels, swelling	C
DIFFERENTIATE:	between temperature and pressure variations	F
<b>VISUAL STANDARDS</b>		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
READ:	accurately, numbers, letters, cursive writing in fine and other print in varying light levels	C
DETECT:	changes in skin color, patient's facial expressions, gait deviations, swelling, atrophy, forms of non-verbal communication (gestures)	C
OBSERVE:	patient and environment in order to assess the patient's condition or needs from a distance of 20 feet	C
<b>COMMUNICATION STANDARDS</b>		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
SPEAK:	in English language in clear, concise manner; to communicate with patients, families, significant others, health care providers, community	C
RESPOND:	to patient with communication disorders (aphasia, hearing loss), or those who use ELL	F
COMPREHEND:	oral and written language, including health care terminology in order to communicate with patients, families, significant others, health care providers, and community	C
WRITE:	in English, clearly, legibly; for charts, home exercise instructions	C
<b>AUDITORY STANDARDS</b>		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
HEAR:	heart sounds, breath sounds, patient distress sounds, machine timer bells and alarms; verbal directions from supervisor from a distance of 20 feet	C
<b>MENTAL/COGNITIVE STANDARDS</b>		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
Function safely, effectively, and calmly under stressful situations.		C
Remain alert to surroundings, potential emergencies; respond to patient situations, i.e. falls, burns, pain, change in physical status.		C
Integrate information, and make decisions based on pertinent data, in a collaborative manner.		C
Interact effectively and appropriately with patients, families, supervisors, and co-workers of the same or different cultures with respect, politeness, tact, collaboration, teamwork and discretion.		C
Communicate an understanding of basic principles of supervision, ethics, and confidentiality.		C
Display basic interpersonal skills necessary to interact in situations requiring close, personal contact.		C
Display attitudes/actions consistent with the ethical standards of the profession.		C

## IMMUNIZATIONS

Health science students must meet immunization requirements under state law, MGL Chapter 76, Section 15C and its regulations at 105 CMR 220.000 – 220.700. Students must also meet any additional immunization requirements required by clinical affiliates.

According to MGL Chapter 76, Section 15C, a health science student who is in contact with patients may be exempt from the immunization requirements imposed under state law pursuant to a medical or religious exemption. Submission of documentation will be required and, if sufficient to qualify for a medical or religious exemption, it will be granted. **PLEASE BE ADVISED** that, while the college will make a reasonable effort to place you in a clinical facility, **clinical placement cannot be guaranteed in light of an un-immunized status. If a clinical placement cannot be secured, then you will be unable to complete the program's clinical requirement. Thus, you will be unable to progress and will fail out of the program.**

**\*Performance Level: O = occasionally 50-74%; F = frequently 75-89%; C = constantly 90-100%**

Applicants who are offered admission must document their ability to perform all essential tasks with or without reasonable accommodation in order to begin the professional courses. If you are an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who seeks a reasonable accommodation, you need to contact Accessibility Services for eligibility determination for reasonable accommodation(s). For those applicants offered admission into the program, you will be asked to self-certify that you meet the Technical Standards.

**PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**TECHNICAL STANDARDS – PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT**

Applicants must acknowledge and self-certify by initialing and signing the Technical Standards form that they have read and understand the need to perform all essential tasks with or without reasonable accommodation. This form is required to be uploaded to the applicant's online application in order to be considered for admission.

<b>PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM TECHNICAL STANDARDS</b>	<b>INITIAL</b>
PHYSICAL STANDARDS	
TACTILE STANDARDS	
VISUAL STANDARDS	
COMMUNICAITON STANDARDS	
AUDITORY STANDARDS	
MENTAL/COGNITIVE STANDARDS	
IMMUNIZATIONS	

I certify that I am able to perform the above Technical Standards and that the above information is true and correct. If, at any time, during my enrollment in the program, I am unable to meet the above performance requirements, please see below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**OR**

I will be seeking a reasonable accommodation for the following technical standard/s

\_\_\_\_\_  
and will make an appointment with accessibility services at [accessibility@northshore.edu](mailto:accessibility@northshore.edu) if I am admitted to the Physical Therapist Assistant program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Appendix C

Informed Consent/Release of Liability Form

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

Laboratory \_\_\_\_\_

Procedure(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Indications, contraindications and precautions in performing this procedure:

Please refer to textbook and class notes

\_\_\_\_\_

Signing this document indicates that I have full knowledge of the indications, contraindications and precautions enclosed in the content of this form. I am voluntarily participating in this course. I understand that my participation includes acting both as the subject (having the procedure performed on me) and as the student clinician (performing the procedure). Participating in either role, I will comply with the following requirements:

I have a completed health form on file with the College and my immunization requirements are up to date.

I have received information about infection control and the prevention of blood borne pathogens.

I will perform the procedures assigned in each laboratory session under the direct supervision of the course instructor.

I will notify the instructor of any contraindications, which apply to my participating in the laboratory procedure.

I will inform the instructor, prior to the laboratory session, of any current condition or any changes that occur which might interfere with my participation in the laboratory procedure.

I understand the information that is obtained about me during the course will be treated as privileged and confidential.

To the best of my knowledge, I am safe to perform the assigned procedures and have the procedures performed on me by fellow classmates. By signing this release of liability, I confirm that I have disclosed all pertinent information and can safely participate in the above-mentioned procedures. I release my fellow students, instructors and College from any liability.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Instructor Signature                      Date

**Appendix D**

**North Shore Community College  
PTA Program  
Student Data Form**

**Name of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Student Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Northshore e-mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact Phone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix E

**NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
(Referred to as “College” below)

**CLINICAL/FIELDWORK WAIVER FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (student name), a student at North Shore Community College enrolled in a Health Professions Program, understand and agree that I am fully responsible for the cost of any physical, emotional, or property injury resulting from my transportation, safe conduct to and from the Clinical Agency for/or my participation in clinical activities and thus, will in no way hold the College or faculty/staff member responsible for any injuries and/or losses incurred during transit or while participating in any clinical activities including but not limited to medical and dental expenses incurred as a result of my participation in this program; and, further, I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the said College against any and all claims, damages and liabilities arising there from.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM Please circle the program you are enrolled in:**

**Medical Assisting**

**Nurse Education**

**Occupational Therapy Assistant**

**Physical Therapist Assistant**

**Practical Nursing**

**Radiologic Technology**

**Respiratory Care**

**Surgical Technology**

**Veterinary Technology**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s consent if the student is under 18 years of age:

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix F

### NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

#### PTA Program Internal Readmission Form

\_\_\_\_\_ has interrupted his/her/their sequence of courses with a:

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

(please circle)

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| • Course(s) dropped during add/drop period | Course(s) Number/Title _____ |
| • Course(s) withdrawal                     | Course(s) Number/Title _____ |
| • Course(s) failure                        | Course(s) Number/Title _____ |
| • Semester stop out                        | Reason for Stop-out _____    |
| • Faculty/department chair recommendation  | Reason _____                 |

After engaging in the internal readmission process and procedures defined by the PTA Program, the following decision with related implications is determined (please circle):

- Readmission granted – Final opportunity to continue in the PTA program. Enrollment and Student Records office will file notice of this one readmission in student's record and maintain PTA program code.
- Readmission denied – Unable to continue in the PTA program. Program code will be changed to “unspecified”, which may impact financial aid status. Student advised to consult a financial aid counselor.

***By signing this form, I (student) understand the above decision. If readmission has been granted, I understand and agree to abide by action plan and requirements established by the dept chair and/or program faculty. I also understand that any further interruption in sequence of PTA courses (dropping a required course during add/drop period, course withdrawal, course failure, stop out, etc.) or behavior that is not in compliance with the established Action Plan and/or program policies will result in program dismissal.***

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PTA Program Department Chair's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix G**

**North Shore Community College  
PTA Program**

**Change of Status to from Full Time to Part Time Curricular Sequence**

I \_\_\_\_\_ have opted to drop down to the part time PTA program as of \_\_\_\_\_ . I understand that it is my responsibility to withdraw from full time sequence courses before the 12<sup>th</sup> week of the fall semester, year 1 and that it is my responsibility to seek assistance regarding financial aid implications from the Office of Student Financial Services.

Reason for drop down to the part time program:

\_\_\_\_\_

Department Chair/ Program Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix H**

**North Shore Community College**

**PTA Program Withdrawal Form**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (name of student) have made the decision to withdraw from the PTA program as of \_\_\_\_\_. I understand that it is my responsibility to seek assistance regarding financial implications from the Office of Student Financial Services.

Reason for withdrawal from the PTA Program:

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix I

NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
PTA PROGRAM GRADE APPEAL FORM

---

**Part I**

*Please Print*

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Form Received: \_\_\_\_\_

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Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for appeal – (attach additional pages if needed): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Part II**

Date Form Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Conference Held: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chairperson's Decision: ☐ Original decision upheld ☐ Original Decision **NOT** upheld

Department Chair's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Part III**

Date Form Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Conference Held: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean of Health Professions Decision:

☐ Original decision upheld ☐ Original Decision **NOT** upheld

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean of Health Professions Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix J**

**North Shore Community College**

**PTA Program and Clinical Professional Behavior Warning Form**

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of the student) have been verbally notified of lack of professional behavior per the program's professional behavior policy and value-based behavior assessment.

Area of concern:

Course number or clinical:

The student is advised to seek assistance from:

- ☐ advisor
- ☐ course instructor
- ☐ tutoring services
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Department Chairperson/ACCE
- ☐ Student Support Center
- ☐ See attached narrative ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Faculty Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

***I have read the above:***

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature**

**Date**



## PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK

### Appendix K

#### CRIMINAL OFFENSE RECORD INVESTIGATION AND SEX OFFENDER RECORD INFORMATION CORI/SORI) POLICY AND DRUG TESTING POLICY

Due to high demand and limited resources, NSCC provides several selective admission programs, particularly in health education and those requiring clinical and field experiences with employers. These programs are not open admission programs and shall establish and maintain additional criteria for admission and continued participation.

#### **CP3710 Selective Program Admission**

The following academic programs are designated as selective admissions programs:

- Nurse Education
- Practical Nursing
- Occupational Therapy Assistant
- Physical Therapist Assistant
- Radiological Technician
- Respiratory Therapy
- Surgical Technician
- Medical Assistant
- Veterinary Technology

These programs maintain additional admission criteria, which can be found in each Program's Handbook. Additionally, the following requirements apply for continued participation in a Selective Program.

#### **Required Drug Testing**

The Division of Health Professions is committed to high quality education and providing excellent clinical experiences for all students in Nursing and Allied Health professions. Students are expected to perform at their highest functional level during all educational and clinical experiences in order to maximize the learning environment and ensure both patient and student safety. Thus, a student's performance at all times must be free of any impairment caused by prescription or non-prescribed drugs, including alcohol or marijuana.

Students enrolled in Nursing and Allied Health programs are required to undergo and pass a college-endorsed ten panel drug and/or alcohol screening analysis in order to remain in the program and be eligible for placement in a clinical facility. Students assigned to clinical education experiences at the College's contracted facilities may also be required to undergo and pass additional random and scheduled drug screenings in order to remain at that clinical facility and in the program. Students who fail a screening or refuse to submit to a screening within the designated time frame will be ineligible for clinical placement, which will affect their status in the program. Students with a positive drug test may appeal the results of the test within five (5) days of notification of the drug test results. This appeal must be in writing and delivered to the college's Dean of Health Professions. An appeal by a student who claims that he/she tested

## **PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK**

positive due to a prescription drug and was unable to clarify this matter with the medical review officer (MRO) from the drug testing lab shall include evidence from a health care provider of the type of prescription, dates of permissible use and dosage amounts. Students whose appeals are denied may re-apply for re-entry into the program after one year. Requests for re-admission will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with program criteria.

Students who are notified of a “negative-dilute” result will submit to a random drug test within 24 hours of the previous test in order to confirm the negative status of the screening. Additional random testing may also be required under the guidelines listed in your program’s handbook.

Students who test positive for marijuana are unable to continue in a clinical placement, which will affect their status in the program. While the use of marijuana is permitted in Massachusetts, marijuana remains classified as a controlled substance under federal law and its use, possession, distribution and/or cultivation at educational institutions remains prohibited. A student who has a prescription for Medical Marijuana and tests positive for marijuana will be referred to the Office of Accessibility Services for consideration as to whether the student’s off-campus use of Medical Marijuana constitutes a reasonable accommodation under state law. If it is determined based on an interactive process with the student that his/her continued off-campus use of Medical Marijuana could impair his/her clinical performance, pose an unreasonable safety risk to patients, or violate the terms of a clinical facility’s affiliation agreement with the College, then the student's continued use of Medical Marijuana will not constitute a reasonable accommodation under the law.

A NSCC student’s program fees will cover the cost of drug testing and retests. Students will be responsible to pay for additional drug screening conducted as part of an appeal. All students will be required to sign a Drug Screening Release Form. By signing this form, students authorize NSCC to conduct the 10-panel urine test for drug screening. The student will be provided additional information regarding the procedure through their program’s handbook and during program orientation. If assistance is needed with this drug screening process, please contact the Dean of Health Professions and Human Services for Nursing and Allied Health Programs.

### **Required Criminal Background Checks**

Students enrolled in Nursing, Allied Health, or Veterinary Technology programs are required to undergo and pass a National Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) background screening in order to remain in the program and be eligible for placement in a clinical facility. Students assigned to clinical education experiences at our contracted facilities may also be required to undergo and pass additional random CORI screenings in order to remain at that clinical facility and in the college program. Students who fail a screening or refuse to submit to a screening within the designated time frame will be ineligible for clinical placement, which will affect their status in the program. Any appeal of a CORI screening will be reviewed and decided by the North Shore Community College CORI Board.

Please refer to the College Policy 22200 and Administrative Procedure 22200 for information concerning the CORI appeal process. Program fees cover the initial National CORI for admissions purposes and the subsequent costs for state and local CORI checks.

## PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK

For more information, please contact the Dean of Health Professions for Nursing and Allied Health Programs or the Dean of STEM and Education for Veterinary Technology.

### **COVID Vaccine Statement for North Shore Community College Health Profession Students**

#### **COVID Requirement**

Although currently, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts doesn't mandate the COVID Vaccine, students in health professions programs are required to have proof of a COVID vaccination series and one booster. For students who did not complete the COVID immunization series prior to April 23, 2023, one Bivalent COVID immunization is required.

Please be advised, while the college will make a reasonable effort to place you in a clinical facility; clinical placement cannot be guaranteed in an un-immunized status. If the college cannot secure a clinical placement due to your un-immunized status, you will be unable to complete the program's clinical requirement. Thus, you will be unable to progress and will fail out of the program.

Proof of COVID Vaccine and one Booster is due upon admission to the PTA Program by the established due date.

#### **Medical/Religious Exemption**

**Students** who cannot be vaccinated for COVID-19 because of a medical reason or religious belief may request an exemption through the College. **Exemptions or reasonable accommodations are not guaranteed.** Personal and philosophical reasons for not getting vaccinated are insufficient, and requests of this nature will be denied.

Individuals who wish to submit a medical exemption must provide a letter from either their MD, NP or PA that states administration of COVID-19 vaccine is likely to be detrimental to the individual's health. For religious exemption, students must state in writing how this vaccine conflicts with his/her/their religious belief.

#### **Falsifying Vaccination Records**

As you may have read, there have been instances of people submitting falsified vaccination records to various institutions. This is fraud. We will be checking the veracity of any card that appears suspicious, and submission of a falsified card will result in disciplinary action.