



**Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
American Physical Therapy Association**

SUMMARY OF ACTION

Department of Physical Therapy
University of Pittsburgh
Bridgeside Point 1
100 Technology Dr, Ste 210
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-3130

On November 3, 2020, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education made the following decision regarding the physical therapist education program at University of Pittsburgh.

Status: ACCREDITATION

Action Taken: Continue Accreditation

Effective Date: November 3, 2020

Information Used to

Make Decisions: Compliance Report received August 5, 2020

Reason for Decision: The Commission's decision to continue accreditation status is based on the program's level of compliance with the Standards and Required Elements and on the professional manner in which the program has addressed the Commission's previous concerns.

The program is reminded that the status of accreditation has been continued based on the program described in the materials reviewed by the Commission. The institution and program are responsible for notifying CAPTE of all substantive changes in the program prior to implementation. Unexpected substantive changes are to be reported immediately after they occur. (See Part 9 of CAPTE's Rules of Practice and Procedure for more information about reporting changes.)

Next Activity: Self-study Report and On-site Visit in **Spring 2025**

NOTICES

REQUIRED STATEMENT OF ACCREDITATION STATUS

Once a program has been accredited, and for as long as it remains accredited, the program must use the statement provided in §8.20 on all educational and promotional materials, including the institution/program web site, where the program's accreditation status is disclosed.

[INSERT Name of Program] at [INSERT Name of Institution] is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call [INSERT Direct Program Phone Number] or email [INSERT Direct Program Email Address].

NOTE: If the institution offers other physical therapy programs not subject to accreditation by CAPTE (e.g., transitional DPT, post-professional degree program, residency or fellowship), the above statement must be edited to clearly indicate that the additional programs are not accredited by CAPTE. Additionally, the information available to the public regarding these programs must clearly state that they are not accredited by CAPTE.

ACCURATE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF THIS DECISION BY THE INSTITUTION

The institution and program must make accurate public disclosure of the accreditation or pre-accreditation status awarded to the program. Further, the United States Department of Education (USDE) requires all recognized accrediting agencies to provide for the public correction of incorrect or misleading information an institution or program releases about accreditation or pre-accreditation status, contents of reports of on-site reviews, and accreditation or pre-accreditation actions with respect to the institution or program [34 CFR 602.23(d) and 602.23(e)]. If the institution or program chooses to disclose any additional information, beyond the accreditation or pre-accreditation status that is within the scope of the USDE rule, such disclosure also must be accurate. Any public disclosure of information within the scope of the rule must include the agency's street address, email address and phone number: Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314; accreditation@apta.org; (703) 684-2782 or (703) 706-3245. If the Accreditation staff finds that an institution or program has released incorrect or misleading information within the scope of the USDE rule, then, acting on behalf of CAPTE the Accreditation staff will make public correction, and reserves the right to disclose this Summary of Action in its entirety for that purpose.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF DECISIONS BY CAPTE

Following all decisions, including decisions to place a program on warning, probation or show cause, or to deny candidacy, withdraw candidacy, withhold accreditation, or withdraw accreditation, the Accreditation staff will, within 24 hours of the official notification of the programs and institutions of the decisions, provide notice to the public by placing notice of the decisions on its web site.

RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT CHANGE(S)

The institution and program are responsible for notifying CAPTE of all reportable changes in the program prior to implementation. Unexpected changes are to be reported immediately after they occur. Reportable changes, some of which may require pre-approval, are described in Part 9 of CAPTE's *Rules of Practice and Procedure* (<http://www.capteonline.org/AccreditationHandbook/>). **It is the program's responsibility to be familiar with these expectations and to provide notification of program changes as required.**

Commission's Findings and Reasons for Decision:

The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education judged the program to have satisfactorily addressed the Commission's concerns regarding the following required element: **4A**. The Commission appreciates the thorough and professional manner in which these obligations have been addressed.



Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
American Physical Therapy Association
REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Department of Physical Therapy
University of Pittsburgh
Bridgeside Point 1
100 Technology Dr, Ste 210
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-3130

On April 28, 2020, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education made the following decision regarding the physical therapist education program at University of Pittsburgh.

Status: ACCREDITATION

Action Taken: Request for Additional Information

Information Used to Make Decisions: 2019 Annual Accreditation Report

Next Activity: Compliance Report due **September 1, 2020**

Reason for Decision: The Commission's decision to continue accreditation status is based on the program's level of compliance with the Standards and Required Elements and on the expectation that the program will, within two years of first being cited, bring itself into compliance with the following element(s) noted in the Commission's Findings: **4A**.

That compliance must be appropriately documented in a Compliance Report which will be used by the Commission to determine compliance with the elements noted in the Findings and to monitor compliance with all the required elements.

The program is reminded that the status of accreditation has been continued based on the program described in the materials reviewed by the Commission. The institution and program are responsible for notifying CAPTE of all substantive changes in the program prior to implementation. Unexpected substantive changes are to be reported immediately after they occur. (See Part 9 of CAPTE's Rules of Practice and Procedure for more information about reporting changes.)

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education is unable to determine compliance with the following required element(s) and therefore requests additional information:

Individual Academic Faculty¹

1. **4A Each core faculty² member, including the program director and clinical education coordinator, has doctoral preparation³, contemporary expertise⁴ in assigned teaching areas, and demonstrated effectiveness in teaching and student evaluation. In addition, core faculty who are PTs and who are teaching clinical PT content are licensed or regulated in any United States jurisdiction as a PT. For CAPTE accredited programs outside the United States, core faculty who are PTs and who are teaching clinical PT content are licensed or regulated in accordance with their country's regulations. (PROVISO: CAPTE will begin enforcing the requirement for doctoral preparation of all core faculty effective January 1, 2020, except for individuals who are enrolled in an academic doctoral degree⁵ program on that date, in which case the effective date will be extended to December 31, 2025; this will be monitored in the Annual Accreditation Report.)**

A review of the program's 2019 Annual Accreditation Report (AAR) data during the CAPTE Spring 2020 meeting indicated that three core faculty (Chunag, Hankin, and Timko) do not appear to possess doctoral preparation, which is an expectation for all core faculty effective January 1, 2020. An exception is granted for those individuals who are enrolled in an academic doctoral degree on January 1, 2020, in which case the effective date is extended to December 31, 2025. In the AAR, it was also reported that none of the three are enrolled in an academic doctoral degree program. Thus, the Commission is unable to determine compliance with Required Element 4A.

In the Compliance Report, provide evidence that all core faculty meet the requirements described in Element 4A, including the expectation that all core faculty are doctorally prepared or were enrolled in an academic doctoral degree program on January 1, 2020, with an anticipated completion date prior to/on December 31, 2025. Provide an updated list of each core faculty member, their credentials and, if enrolled in an academic doctoral degree, include the start date and the anticipated date of completion. If the program hires additional faculty, provide a CV,

¹ **Academic faculty:** Those faculty members who participate in the delivery of the didactic (classroom and laboratory) portion of the curriculum. The academic faculty is comprised of the core faculty and the associated faculty.

² **Core faculty:** Those individuals appointed to and employed primarily in the program, including the program director, the director of clinical education (DCE) and other faculty who report to the program director. The core faculty have the responsibility and authority to establish academic regulations and to design, implement, and evaluate the curriculum. The core faculty include physical therapists and may include others with expertise to meet specific curricular needs. The core faculty may hold tenured, tenure track, or non-tenure track positions. Members of the core faculty typically have full-time appointments, although some part-time faculty members may be included among the core faculty.

³ **Doctoral preparation:** Earned doctorate, including the DPT.

⁴ **Contemporary expertise:** Expertise beyond that obtained in an entry-level physical therapy program that represents knowledge and skills reflective of current practice. Longevity in teaching or previous experience teaching a particular course or content area does not by itself necessarily constitute expertise.

⁵ **Academic doctoral degree:** A PhD or other doctoral degree that requires advanced work beyond the master's level, including the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial scholarly achievement. Definition adapted from IPED definition found at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/glossary/?charindex=D>; last accessed 1/12/15.

completed Faculty Scholarship Form (version 2019), notification of assigned teaching areas, and evidence of contemporary expertise in each assigned content area.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

Thank you for the Request for Additional Information (RAI) regarding the compliance of the University of Pittsburgh Doctor of Physical Therapy Program with Element 4A that requires all core faculty members to be doctorally prepared effective January 1, 2020.

The RAI was based on the inclusion of three faculty members (Wei-Neng Chuang, Tara Hankin and Michael Timko) who did not have doctoral preparation that were listed as core faculty in the 2019 Annual Accreditation Report (AAR). It was stated that the RAI was based on required element 4A, specifically the proviso “CAPTE will begin enforcing the requirement for doctoral preparation of all core faculty effective January 1, 2020.”

Mr. Chuang, Ms. Hankin and Mr. Timko meet the criteria for associated faculty and were reclassified as associated faculty effective January 1, 2020. Specifically, all three individuals have primary responsibilities in programs other than the professional DPT program, namely:

- Mr. Chuang is the Director of Anatomy Labs for the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. While he coordinates and teaches the human anatomy laboratory component for PT 2030 – Anatomy in the DPT Program, his primary responsibilities also include coordination and teaching the laboratory sessions for human anatomy courses taught in the Athletic Training, Physician Assistant, Prosthetics and Orthotics and Undergraduate Rehabilitation Science Programs.
- Ms. Hankin is Vice Chair for Post-Professional Education in the Department of Physical Therapy. While she coordinates and teaches PT 2074 – Evidence-Based Practice 4 in the DPT program, which focuses on quality and performance improvement, as Vice Chair for Post-Professional Education she is primarily responsible for providing administrative oversight for the Masters of Science in Physical Therapy degree program and other non-credit certificate and continuing education programs in the Department of Physical Therapy.
- Mr. Timko is the Director of Musculoskeletal Post-Professional Education, which also includes functioning as the Program Director of the Primary Spine Practitioner Certificate Program. While Mr. Timko teaches the spine unit in PT 2032 – Musculoskeletal Physical Therapy 2 in the DPT program, his primary responsibility in the Department of Physical Therapy is to direct the musculoskeletal track in the Masters of Science in Physical Therapy degree program and the Primary Spine Practitioner Certificate Program, as well as to develop other post-professional certificate programs in content areas that include orthopaedic manual physical therapy, lower extremity, shoulder and elbow, and foot and ankle.

Additionally, Michael Schneider, DC, PhD was also moved to associated faculty effective January 1, 2020. While Dr. Schneider contributes to teaching psychological aspects of care in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program, his primary responsibilities within the Department are related to research and post-professional education, specifically the Primary Spine Practitioner Program.

Also reflected in the list of core faculty is the addition of Andrew Sprague PT PhD, who joined the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh Department of Physical Therapy on June 1, 2020. Dr. Sprague simultaneously completed his Doctor of Physical Therapy (2015) and Master's in Clinical Anatomy and Health Sciences (2015). He then completed his PhD in Biomechanics and Movement Science (2020) where his research focused on evaluation and rehabilitation of overuse injuries of the Achilles and patellar tendons. Furthermore, during this time he developed expertise in musculoskeletal ultrasound imaging. Dr. Sprague's primary responsibility in the entry level DPT program is teaching PT 2029 (Kinesiology). He will also serve as a guest lecturer and assist with comprehensive exams in other courses within the musculoskeletal curriculum (PT 2031, PT 2032, and PT 2033). Prior to joining the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Sprague received advanced pedagogical training through University of Delaware's Center for Teaching and Learning and acted as a teaching assistant for several courses within their entry level DPT program, including Clinical Gross Anatomy, Advanced Regional Anatomy, Basic Evaluation Techniques, Orthopedics and Musculoskeletal Imaging, and Spine. Dr. Sprague has 5 years of clinical experience the outpatient sports and orthopedics setting and maintains his evidence-based practice by regularly attending and presenting at national and international conferences (APTA CSM, ESSKA, Scandinavian Sports Medicine Congress, American Society of Biomechanics). Additionally, he is a member of the Research, Orthopedics and Sports Academies of the APTA and regularly attends orthopedic and sports focused journal clubs and case rounds.

With these changes in the designation of Mr. Chuang, Ms. Hankin, Mr. Timko and Dr. Schneider as associated faculty and the addition of Dr. Sprague as a core faculty member, we still have 21 doctorally prepared core faculty that are primarily employed to support the Doctor of Physical Therapy program. An updated listing of core faculty can be found in Appendix 1 (see page 5).



**Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
American Physical Therapy Association**

SUMMARY OF ACTION

Department of Physical Therapy
University of Pittsburgh
Bridgeside Point 1
100 Technology Dr, Ste 210
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-3130

On October 31, 2018, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education made the following decision regarding the physical therapist education program at University of Pittsburgh.

Status: ACCREDITATION

Action Taken: Continue Accreditation

Effective Date: October 31, 2018

**Information Used to
Make Decisions:** Compliance Report received 8/16/2018

Reason for Decision: The Commission's decision to continue accreditation status is based on the program's level of compliance with the Standards and Required Elements and on the professional manner in which the program has addressed the Commission's previous concerns.

The program is reminded that the status of accreditation has been continued based on the program described in the materials reviewed by the Commission. The institution and program are responsible for notifying CAPTE of all substantive changes in the program prior to implementation. Unexpected substantive changes are to be reported immediately after they occur. (See Part 9 of CAPTE's Rules of Practice and Procedure for more information about reporting changes.)

Next Activity: Self-study Report and On-site Visit in Spring 2025

NOTICES

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ACCURATE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF THIS DECISION BY THE INSTITUTION

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PUBLIC NOTICE OF DECISIONS BY CAPTE

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RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT CHANGE(S)

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Commission's Findings and Reasons for Decision:

The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education judged the program to have satisfactorily addressed the Commission's concerns regarding the following required elements: 3H3 and 3H4. The Commission appreciates the thorough and professional manner in which these obligations have been addressed.



**Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
American Physical Therapy Association
REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Department of Physical Therapy
University of Pittsburgh
Bridgeside Point 1
100 Technology Dr, Ste 210
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-3130

On May 2, 2018, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education made the following decision regarding the physical therapist education program at University of Pittsburgh.

Action Taken: Request for Additional Information
Information Used to Make Decisions: 2017 Annual Accreditation Report
Next Activity: Compliance Report due September 1, 2018

The Commission is unable to determine compliance with the following required elements and therefore requests additional information.

- 1. 3H Program policies, procedures, and practices provide for compliance with accreditation policies and procedures including:**
 - 3H3 following policies and procedures of CAPTE as outlined in the CAPTE Rules of Practice and Procedure; and**
 - 3H4 timely notification of expected or unexpected substantive change(s) within the program and of any change in institutional accreditation status or legal authority to provide post-secondary education.**

During its Spring 2018 CAPTE meeting, the Commission reviewed the submitted 2017 Annual Accreditation Report (AAR) data. In the program's 2017 AAR, the program indicated that the number of accepted students who enrolled in the professional phase of the program was 64. CAPTE has the set class size for the program as 58. Per CAPTE's Rules of Practice and Procedure, specifically Rule 9.8 (a) it states the following: "9.8 Permanent Increases (greater than 10%) in the CAPTE Set Size of Student Cohorts to be Admitted (a) For the purpose of this section, increasing cohort size refers to CAPTE set class size. Set class size includes all new and re-entering students admitted to the program. Programs may increase a cohort size to re-enter a student(s) from another cohort. CAPTE staff must be notified within one week of the change in cohort size if the class size is increased greater than 10%. The Commission will review the information and may require a compliance report if any potential issues are raised. CAPTE will not permit any increase in class size greater than 10% for any other reason without approval of a substantive request for change. Increasing cohort size for re-entering students does not change CAPTE set class size of the program. Programs operating within their established CAPTE set

class size are not required to seek approval of changes in the size of cohorts admitted to the program. NOTE: According to Rule 7.19, any increase in cohort size (even if greater than 10%) or the number of cohorts is not permitted for programs in candidacy until eligible to seek a substantive change.” Also, in CAPTE’s Standards and Required Elements for Accreditation of Physical Therapist Education Programs, Element 3H3 states: “following policies and procedures of CAPTE as outlined in the CAPTE Rules of Practice and Procedure.” Based on the information provided in the program’s 2017 AAR, the Commission determined that the program accepted a class size greater than 10% above the program’s set class size (64 students is greater than a 10% increase with a set class size of 58; 63 is a 10% increase.) and it did not submit an Application for Approval of Substantive Change to request prior approval for increasing class size. Therefore, CAPTE is unable to determine if there are program policies, procedures, and practices in place to provide for compliance with accreditation policies and procedures.

In the Compliance Report, verify the number of students accepted into the program in the 2017 calendar year. If it is above the above the CAPTE set class size of 58 for the program, the program is to return to its CAPTE set class size of 58 with its next admission cycle. If the program feels there is a mistake with the CAPTE set class size of 58, please provide evidence indicating so. Also, if the program has accepted a cohort of students in calendar year 2018, indicate the number of students accepted. If the program wishes to increase its set class size, an Application for Approval of Substantive Change will need to be submitted for CAPTE consideration and approval before the program is allowed to accept more than 10% above its CAPTE set class size of 58 students. In addition, provide evidence of program policies and procedures that ensure compliance with CAPTE Rules of Practice and Procedure. Identify how the program will ensure the future practice of maintaining compliance with accreditation policies and procedures.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

In reference to Required Elements 3H3 and 3H4, we were under the impression that a class size of 64 was within, and did not exceed, the 10% rule per CAPTE Rules of Practice and Procedure 9.8. We based this on $10\% \text{ of } 58 = 5.8$, which we rounded up to 6 students to equal 64. As a result, we did not believe this required an Application for Approval of a Substantive Change (AASC).

It is important to note that there were two extenuating circumstances that resulted in us admitting larger class sizes in the 2016-17 admission cycle. First, we received approval to grant a dual DPT degree and PhD in Bioengineering (DPT-PhD BioE). To provide tuition support for the first cohort of two students, we were asked to increase the class size by the same number to offset this tuition cost. We agreed to this as we were confident that we had the faculty, staff, and facility resources to do so. Second, in January 2017 we were informed of a \$400 per month reduction in the scholarship that students were to receive during their upcoming year-long terminal clinical education experience. This resulted in a loss of \$4,800 per student. Because students were notified after submitting their financial aid requests, we sought and obtained permission to reduce their tuition by the same amount, \$4,800, during the 3rd year of the program. Our approval was granted, but with the provision that we admit additional students over the next two years to make up the costs for this tuition reduction.

To meet the enrollment requirements noted above, we admitted 64 students in June 2017 to the Class of 2020. Additionally, because our new cohort of students begin in the first week of June,

we had already admitted 64 students for the Class of 2021 before we received the Request for Additional Information. Going forward, with the clarification that our class size is fixed at 58, we do not plan to enroll more than 63 (8.6% increase) in future admission cycles.

While we acknowledge that we were remiss in fully understanding the CAPTE policy change on fixed class sizes, we believe that that we have the resources (faculty, staff, space and financial) to adequately educate the number of students that were admitted in the Classes of 2020 and 2021. It is also important to note that we do have procedures in place to comply with these guidelines.

Thank you for considering this information. Please let us know need any other information or clarification.