

PHYSICAL THERAPY, D.P.T.

Contact

Sally McCormack Tutt PT, D.P.T., M.P.H., Ed.D.
Program Director/Clinical Professor, Department of Physical Therapy
smccormack@une.edu

Mission

The Department of Physical Therapy educates students committed to lifelong learning, optimizing the health and well-being of diverse local and global communities, and advancing the profession.

Core Values

1. Academic excellence: Create learning opportunities that cultivate adaptive, lifelong learners.
2. Inclusive community: Promote a culture that fosters a supportive environment in which all people can thrive.
3. Global citizenship: Provide opportunities for engagement locally, nationally, and globally.
4. Scholarly excellence: Generate, translate, and disseminate knowledge.
5. Professional engagement: Participate in professional associations and advocacy.
6. Collaboration: Advance interprofessional collaboration and community partnerships.
7. Resource stewardship: Optimize utilization of resources to maximize academic experience.

Program Description

The Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.) program is designed to graduate physical therapy practitioners prepared to enter the profession in diverse healthcare settings. The curriculum is structured around a series of increasingly complex clinical cases integrated across courses and threaded with foundational knowledge of anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, neuroscience, and pathophysiology. Key areas of emphasis include adaptive learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, and evidence-based collaborative practice.

The 96-credit curriculum spans seven semesters. Beginning with the first semester, the curriculum lays the foundation for student success through instruction in foundational concepts. Semesters two through five include didactic instruction interspersed with part-time (local) integrated clinical education experiences and six weeks of full-time clinical education experience. Semesters seven and eight each include a full-time clinical education experience. The culminating semester is a full-time, 12-week clinical education experience and one online class that compliments learning in the clinical setting.

The first semester includes instruction in human anatomy, foundational instruction in clinical knowledge and skills, tissue biology, and knowledge related to Physical Therapy practice. Didactic courses during semesters two thru six are structured with clinical cases to enhance critical thinking and clinical application. Courses are organized as five curricular threads: 1) Science of Movement, 2) Patient/Client Management, 3) Health and Human Development, 4) Professional Roles and Responsibilities, and 5) Clinical Education. Students learn to employ an evidence-based approach to the physical therapy management of impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions related to movement, function, and health across the lifespan. Coursework also includes the study of human

movement, the psychosocial impacts of health conditions, and relevant medical and surgical management. Students also learn various roles of the physical therapist in disease prevention, health promotion, education, consultation, legislation and policymaking, management, leadership, advocacy, and healthcare administration.

Part-time integrated clinical education experiences are introduced early in the curriculum to support didactic learning. Full-time clinical education experiences, totaling 30 weeks, begin at the end of the fifth semester. The D.P.T. curriculum culminates with two full-time, terminal clinical education experiences. Clinical sites are available within the United States and internationally to provide a breadth and depth of experiences to support learning in diverse healthcare settings.

Beyond the classroom and the clinic, students have opportunities to further engage in scholarly inquiry, service-learning, community-based activities, global travel, and interprofessional education. Students may also explore topics beyond those required in the curriculum through elective courses and/or workshops.

Accreditation

The D.P.T. program at the University of New England is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteronline.org>.

If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call (207) 221-4590 or email ptdepartment@une.edu (accreditation@apta.org).

Academic Policy

Students are expected to abide by the academic policies and procedures and conduct code outlined in the University of New England (UNE) Student Handbook (<https://www.une.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/student-handbook/>), the Department of Physical Therapy Student Handbook, and the WCHP Graduate Program Progression Policies and Procedures (PDF) (<https://www.une.edu/media/96768/>). Failure to abide by these policies, procedures, or codes may result in disciplinary action.

Transfer Credit

Transfer Credit

- Transfer credits are rarely awarded to students who transfer from another Physical Therapy program.
- The program director and admissions committee will review and award transfer credits on a case-by-case basis.

Advanced Standing

No advanced standing placement available.

Experiential Standing

No credit is awarded for experiential learning.

Admissions

See Graduate Admissions (<https://catalog.une.edu/graduate/admissions/>) for more information.

Financial Information

Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees for subsequent years may vary. Other expenses include books and housing. Please consult this catalog's Financial Information (<https://catalog.une.edu/graduate/financial-information-graduate-programs/>) page for specific tuition and fees information.

Other Expenses

Other expenses will include textbooks and lab fees in some courses. Students should also anticipate transportation, housing, and living expenses during clinical education experiences.

Equipment

All students are required to have access to high-speed internet service and a laptop computer with the capability of utilizing Brightspace or a similar online education format, and ExamSoft.

Financial Aid

Detailed information and applications are available on request from the Financial Aid Office. Call (207) 602-2342 or visit the Financial Aid website (<https://www.une.edu/sfs/>).

Curricular Requirements

The Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.) program is seven semesters in length and includes a combination of classroom coursework, laboratory coursework, and three full-time clinical education experiences. In addition to the 96 required credits, students are invited to take elective coursework offered by the department.

Code	Title	Hours
Program Required Courses ¹		
PTH 526	Human Anatomy for the Physical Therapist	6
PTH 532	Tissue Biology for the PT	2
PTH 533	Principles of PT Practice	2
PTH 534	Foundations in Clinical Rehabilitation	6
PTH 551	Science of Movement 1	6
PTH 552	Patient/Client Management 1	5
PTH 553	Health and Human Development 1	2
PTH 554	Prof Roles & Responsibilities 1	2
PTH 555	Clinical Education 1	1
PTH 561	Science of Movement 2	6
PTH 562	Patient/Client Management 2	5
PTH 563	Health and Human Development 2	2
PTH 564	Professional Roles & Responsibilities 2	2
PTH 565	Clinical Education 2	1
PTH 611	Science of Movement 3	5
PTH 613	Health and Human Development 3	2
PTH 614	Professional Roles & Responsibilities 3	2
PTH 615	Clinical Education 3	1
PTH 616	Science of Movement 3 (Patient/Client Management 3)	6
PTH 621	Science of Movement 4	3
PTH 622	Patient/Client Management 4	3
PTH 623	Health and Human Development 4	2
PTH 624	Professional Roles & Responsibilities 4	2

PTH 626	Capstone Experience	1
PTH 628	Clinical Education Experience 1 (Clinical Education Experience 1)	4
PTH 634	Professional Roles & Responsibilities 5	1
PTH 638	(Clinical Education Experience 2)	8
PTH 717	Clinical Education Experience 3	8
Total Hours		96

¹ Please note: Curriculum is subject to change.

Conferring the Doctor of Physical Therapy degree is contingent upon the successful completion of academic and clinical coursework, including a total of 96 academic credits.

Academic and Technical Standards

Academic Standards

The Department of Physical Therapy, the Westbrook College of Health Professions, and the University of New England are committed to offering a quality physical therapist education program that complies with the evaluative criteria of the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. The program provides learning experiences to enable graduates to achieve the outcomes required for the practice of physical therapy. Please refer to the WCHP Graduate Program Progression Policies and Procedures (PDF) (<https://www.une.edu/pdfs/wchp-graduate-program-progression-policies-and-procedures/>) for a detailed description of academic standards.

Essential Technical Standards

The Essential Technical Standards support the admission, promotion, and graduation of students in the University of New England Doctor of Physical Therapy Program. Physical therapy is an intellectually, physically, and psychologically demanding profession. It is during the prescribed curriculum that students begin to develop the qualities necessary for practice as a physical therapist. Students acquire the foundation of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors needed for the physical therapists' professional careers. The abilities that physical therapists must possess to practice safely and competently are reflected in the technical standards that follow. The standards apply to all program activities, including those taking place in classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings. The obligation of the D.P.T. program is to produce effective and competent physical therapists who are able to serve the needs of society. Therefore, all students will be held to the same standards.

Candidates for the Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.) degree must be able to meet these minimum standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, for successful completion of degree requirements.

Please review this document carefully to determine whether you possess the abilities and skills reflected in the technical standards below.

Technical Standards: Abilities and Skills

Reflected in the standards that follow are those abilities and skills that students must possess to engage safely and competently in all program activities, including those taking place in classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings. The abilities and skills are described in five domains, including observation skills; communication skills; motor skills (fine and gross); intellectual-conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities; and behavioral and social/emotional attributes.

Observation

Observation requires the functional use of vision, hearing, and somatic sensations. A student must be able to observe lectures, laboratory dissection of cadavers, and lecture and laboratory demonstrations in person. The student must be able to observe a patient accurately, observe digital and waveform readings, and other graphic images to determine a patient's condition. Examples in which these observational skills are required include: palpation of peripheral pulses, bony prominences, and ligamentous structures; visual and tactile evaluation for areas of inflammation; and visual and tactile assessment of the presence and degree of edema or other changes in the skin and underlying tissues.

Communication

Communication includes: speech, language, reading, writing, and computer literacy. Students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients to elicit information regarding affect and functional activities, as well as perceive non-verbal communications. Students must also be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in person and in writing with other members of the health care community to convey information essential for safe and effective care.

Motor

Students must possess sufficient motor function and strength to elicit information from the patient examination, examples include palpation, auscultation, tapping, manual muscle testing, and other examination maneuvers. Students must be able to execute movements required to provide general and therapeutic care, examples include: safely lifting, transferring, and positioning large, heavy, and/or immobile patients and guard during gait training, using assistive devices and orthotics. Students must possess sufficient motor function and strength to be able to learn and then demonstrate the ability to position themselves and patients, perform manual mobilization techniques, perform non-surgical wound debridement, and place electrodes. Learning these skills and performing necessary physical therapy techniques on patients requires coordination of both gross and fine motor skills, sufficient strength, mobility, endurance, balance, proper body mechanics, and the integrated use of touch and vision, or the functional equivalent.

During the curriculum, students are required to perform motor skills representative of licensed physical therapists working with patients in a variety of settings.

Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities

To effectively solve problems, students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, receive information visually and through communication and examination, and process, integrate and synthesize that information quickly, sometimes immediately, and, at times, under stressful and chaotic conditions. For example, the student must be able to quickly and accurately synthesize knowledge and integrate the relevant aspects of a patient's history and examination findings, accurately assess the patient and develop an effective treatment program. In addition, students must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand spatial relationships of structures.

Behavioral and Social/Emotional Attributes

A student must possess the psychological ability required for the full utilization of their intellectual abilities, for the exercise of good judgment, for the prompt completion of all responsibilities inherent to patient care, and for the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, colleagues and other health care providers. Students must be able to tolerate physically and mentally taxing workloads and function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to a changing environment, display flexibility and learn to function in the

face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of patients. As a component of their education, students must act professionally and maturely and demonstrate ethical behavior commensurate with the profession of physical therapy.

Reasonable Accommodations

The University of New England Physical Therapy Program welcomes qualified learners with disabilities and encourages students to make requests for accommodations early in the program. The program is committed to providing equal access through the use of reasonable accommodations for students who are otherwise qualified and able to satisfy the technical standards listed above and the academic requirements of the program with or without accommodation. Candidates who, after review of the technical standards, determine that they require reasonable accommodation to fully engage in the program should contact the Student Access Center (<https://www.une.edu/student-affairs/life-une/division-student-affairs/student-access-center/>) to schedule a confidential access consultation. Given the nature of our program, timely requests are essential and encouraged because time may be needed to create and implement approved accommodations. Because requests for retroactive accommodations are not reasonable and will not be granted, students should seek accommodations early in the program if they believe that they will need accommodations at some point in the program.

Learning Outcomes

The Department of Physical Therapy, the Westbrook College of Health Professions, and the University of New England are committed to offering a quality physical therapist education program that complies with the 2024 standards of the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE).

After completing the D.P.T. curriculum, students will:

- Successfully apply concepts from biological, physical, behavioral, and movement sciences to patient care and population health.
- Correctly perform patient/client screening, examination, evaluation, intervention, and reassessment to determine diagnoses, prognoses, plans of care, including referral and consultation, across the lifespan.
- Effectively critically appraise, synthesize, and apply scholarly evidence, clinical expertise, and patient values to guide physical therapy services, practice management, and quality improvement.
- Communicate effectively, compassionately, and professionally using culturally responsive strategies and feedback.
- Consistently demonstrate professional behaviors, ethical decision-making, accountability, resilience, and self-reflection in alignment with professional identity formation and life-long learning.
- Collaborate with patients, caregivers, and team members in a variety of settings while demonstrating the ability to supervise and delegate appropriately.
- Effectively design and deliver physical therapy services that promote health, wellness, disease prevention, and advocacy for patients, communities, and the profession.
- Demonstrate culturally responsive behaviors when working with individuals and populations from diverse backgrounds and in various contexts.

Program Goals

- Core Attributes: To promote a culture that fosters a professional, collegial, and collaborative environment in which all people can thrive.

- Academics: Foster academic excellence and lifelong learning.
- Clinical Practice: To promote faculty and student involvement in physical therapy clinical practice across the continuum of care in a variety of settings.
- Research and Scholarship: To generate and disseminate new knowledge.
- Service: Promote opportunities for faculty and student engagement in service to local, national, global, and professional communities.
- Administration: Optimize utilization of internal and external resources to maximize the experience of students and faculty.