



## Physical Therapy

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
**ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS**

### *Technical Standards for Admission, Promotion, and Graduation*

#### **I. Introduction**

These technical standards support the admission, promotion, and graduation of the University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program. Physical Therapy (PT) is an intellectually, physically, and psychologically demanding profession. It is during the rigorous "lock-step" longitudinal curriculum that the student begins to develop the qualities necessary for demonstrating the knowledge, skills, abilities and professional behaviors of a physical therapist. Physical therapists must demonstrate the ability to practice safely and effectively in accordance with the technical standards that follow.

For purposes of this document and unless otherwise defined, the term "candidate" means candidates for admission to the physical therapy program as well as enrolled students who are candidates for promotion and graduation.

#### **II. Reasonable Accommodations**

The University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program is committed to diversity and to attracting and educating students who will make the population of healthcare professionals more representative of the state and the nation. The PT Program is committed to excellence in accessibility and encourages students with disabilities to disclose and seek accommodations.

Candidates should review the technical standards to determine if they require accommodation(s) to fully engage in the curriculum of the PT Program. If accommodations may be needed, the candidate should contact the [Office for Disability, Access and Inclusion \(ODAI\)](#) to confidentially discuss their accommodation needs. Given the clinical nature of the PT Program, additional time may be needed to implement accommodation(s). Accommodations are never retroactive; therefore, timely requests are essential and encouraged.

**Candidates for the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree must be able to meet the minimum standards (described in Section III below), with or without reasonable accommodations, for successful completion of degree requirements.**

### **III. Standards**

#### **Observation**

A candidate must be able to use observation skills in all didactic and clinical learning environments, including but not limited to, lectures, laboratory dissection of anatomical donors, clinical simulations, and demonstrations of clinical skills. Observation, includes but is not limited to, assessment of movement, gait, edema and skin changes, recorded digital and waveform readings, and other graphic or measurement images to determine a patient's condition. Observation requires vision, hearing, and somatic sensations, or the functional equivalent.

#### **Communication**

A candidate 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. Candidates must also be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in person, virtually, and in writing with interprofessional colleagues to convey information essential for safe and effective care.

#### **Motor**

A candidate must possess sufficient motor function to effectively manage the patient encounter from patient examination through intervention. Candidates must be able to provide general and therapeutic care that is safe for the patient, any caregivers, and themselves. This includes, but is not limited to, the performance, description or direction of others to safely lift, transfer, guard, and position patients. In addition, many physical therapy interventions require advanced hands-on skills to safely perform patient care including manual therapy, wound debridement, and treatments that use accessory devices.

#### **Intellectual-conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities**

To effectively solve problems, a candidate must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize information in a timely fashion. The candidate must be able to synthesize knowledge and integrate relevant aspects of patient history and examination to develop an effective treatment plan. Candidates must be able to comprehend and analyze spatial relationships of anatomical structures and systems as they pertain to human movement.

#### **Behavioral and Social Attributes**

A candidate 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 diagnosis and care of patients, and for the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, interprofessional colleagues, and other health care providers. Candidates 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 care of, and communication with, patients and their family/caregivers.

#### **Ethics and Professionalism**

A candidate must maintain and display ethical and moral behaviors commensurate with the role of a physical therapist in all interactions with patients, faculty, staff, students, clinical colleagues,

and the public. The candidate is expected to understand the legal and ethical aspects of the scope of physical therapy and function within the legal, ethical standards, and core values of the physical therapy profession.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the Technical Standards and understand the minimum requirements. I  
(initial) know how to access accommodations if I determine I may need any to fully  
engage in the PT Program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will contact the PT Program Director of Student Affairs and/or my faculty  
(initial) advisor within 5 business days if my ability to meet these minimum standards,  
with or without accommodation, should change while I am an enrolled student.

Date:    mo/day/year