



Dear Physical Therapist Assistant Student Applicant:

We at the River Valley Community College welcome your interest in the Physical Therapist Assistant program. Enclosed, please find information regarding the college and the program. Additionally, please find the prerequisites for admission.

I would be happy to meet with you during the application process. Feel free to contact me with any further questions about the program, the application and/or the admission process.

Please note: if you plan to transfer to a Physical Therapy program following coursework at this college, please relay these plans to me as soon as possible. Transferability of credits earned here is solely the determination of the receiving institution.

Sincerely,

*Laurie Clute*

Laurie Clute, PT, MS  
Director, PTA Program  
River Valley Community River College  
1 College Drive  
Claremont, NH 03743

email: [lclute@ccsnh.edu](mailto:lclute@ccsnh.edu)

Phone: (603) 542-7744 ext 419  
(800) 837-0658 ext 419

## Benchmarks

The PTA program uses several benchmarks to assess the quality of the curriculum. The interested student would be advised to compare these benchmarks when applying:

- **Matriculation rate:** The PTA program accepts a maximum of 15 students into the program each fall and reserves 5 more seats for students interested in double majors. Students who begin classes in January are counted in with the students the following fall. Over the past 3 years (2005-2007), all students who successfully completed the college and PTA program applications were admitted to the program.
- **Graduation rate:** Over the past 3 years (2005-2007), the graduation rate averages 74%. This number reflects students who began in the PTA program but then changed majors (this accounts for the majority of people not finishing the program), or who had to move to a 3 year plan or withdraw for academic, financial or personal reasons.
- **License exam passing rate:** The majority of states require PTA graduates to take a national licensing exam. Over the past 3 years (2005-2007), the passing rate for first time test takers from this PTA program was 97%, while the national average was 77%.
- **Employment rate:** Over the past 3 years (2005-2007), of those graduates who passed the licensing exam, 100% were employed at least part time in the field within 6 months.
- **Accreditation:** The PTA program was last accredited in 2006 by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education.

(mydoc/program documents/PTA packet)  
(mydoc/program documents/benchmarks)

## **Prerequisites for Admission to the PTA Program**

**The applicant to the PTA program must show evidence of having completed the following in order to be considered for admission:**

- College Application Form (see catalog)
  
- Demonstrate general knowledge of the physical therapy field via completion of an information questionnaire (see attached). Strongly encouraged methods useful to learn more about the profession include: volunteer or employment as an aide in a PT clinic, or spend several hours observing in a PT clinic or interview a PT or PTA. Participation in health occupation courses is also useful.
  
- Two reference forms completed by a recent employer, supervisor or teacher who has known you for a period of time, and who you believe can adequately evaluate your potential success on this career path. Be sure to use the enclosed forms.
  
- Essential Functions for PTA Program: Read the attached pages of essential functions and sign the acknowledgement that, indeed, you can perform these tasks with or without reasonable accommodations.

### **Pre-requisites for specific courses:**

- High school or college credits in chemistry are required prior to registering for Anatomy and Physiology I (first year, fall semester).
  
- Identified Accuplacer scores are required for English Composition I, Math, Introduction to OT/PT
  
- CPR certification must be completed prior to registering for PTC 112: PT Procedures I (first year, fall semester). Either American Heart Association (level C) or American Red Cross (For Professional Rescuers – FPR) is acceptable. It is the student's responsibility to locate, pay for and successfully complete CPR certification and/or re-certification. Current CPR certification must be maintained until graduation.
  
- Personal health insurance and professional liability insurance are mandatory. You must provide proof of health insurance prior to attending clinical education assignments (summer semester between first and second year, and spring semester of second year). You will be automatically billed (with tuition bill) for professional liability coverage during the semesters you will be in the clinic. The cost is about \$15/year.
  
- Copies of your up-to-date immunization record must be given to the PTA Program Director, Laurie Clute, or Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education, Chris Rolon (prior to registering for summer clinical experience between first and second year, and again, prior to spring semester of second year).

Revised: May 2002

Revised: April 2003

Revised May 2007

Revised June 2008

(my doc/program documents/PTA packet)

## **PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE**

Briefly answer the following questions on separate paper. This questionnaire is to be read by each college interviewer. It is important that you answer each question to insure that the interviewer has as much information as possible. Please return this questionnaire with your answers.

One of the admission requirements asks the potential student to demonstrate general knowledge of the Physical Therapy field. This may be through opportunities such as employment, volunteering or observations in Physical Therapy settings, discussions with Physical Therapists or Physical Therapist Assistants, participation in Health Occupations courses or personal experience.

1. Explain what the field of Physical Therapy is about.
2. How did you become interested in Physical Therapy?
3. Please describe methods you used to gain general knowledge of the Physical Therapy field.

### **Please return to:**

Admissions Office  
River Valley Community College  
One College Drive  
Claremont, NH 03743

**Essential Skills  
for Candidates to the River Valley Community College  
Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

Decisions made by the candidate to this educational program for physical therapist assistants should be made with consideration of the following essential skills. The physical therapist assistant (PTA) is the technically trained person in physical therapy, providing physical therapy interventions after a physical therapist has examined and evaluated the patient and established a treatment plan. The following standards reflect reasonable expectations of the PTA student for the performance of common physical therapy functions. These standards do not reflect what may be required for employment of the graduate PTA.

In adopting these standards the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is mindful of the patient's right to safe and quality health care by our students and graduates. The PTA student must be able to apply the knowledge and skills necessary to function in a broad variety of clinical situations while providing the spectrum of physical therapy treatments. Each candidate in this Associate in Science degree program must have the ability to learn and perform the following competencies and skills:

**Motor:** Candidate must have sufficient motor capabilities to execute the movements and skills required to provide safe and effective physical therapy interventions. These include, but are not limited to-

- Coordination, speed and agility to assist and safely guard (protect) patients who are walking, exercising or performing other rehabilitation activities.
- Ability to adjust and position equipment and patients, which involves bending or stooping freely to floor level and reaching above the head.
- Ability to move or position patients and equipment, which involves lifting, carrying, pulling, and guiding weights up to and including 50 pounds.
- Ability to guide, resist, and assist patients, or to provide emergency care, which involves the activities of standing, kneeling, sitting, walking or crawling, for 90 minutes without rest.
- Ability to perform, with safe and proper body mechanics, the transfer and gait training techniques used during physical therapy interventions with patients.
- Ability and dexterity to manipulate the devices used in physical therapy, which involves adjusting gauges, dials, small nuts/bolts, equipment settings, etc.
- Ability to administer CPR without assistance.

**Sensory:** Candidate must possess the ability to observe and participate in demonstrations and in physical measures applied to patients. This includes the ability to obtain information in classroom, laboratory or clinical settings through observation, auscultation, palpation and other measures, including but not limited to-

- Visual ability (corrected as necessary) to recognize and interpret facial expressions and body language, identify normal and abnormal patterns of movement, to read or set parameters on physical therapy equipment, to discriminate color changes, and to interpret and assess the environment.
- Auditory ability (corrected as necessary) to recognize and respond to soft voices, auditory

timers, equipment alarms, call bells, and to effectively use devices for measurement of blood pressure and breath sounds.

- Tactile ability to palpate a pulse and to detect changes or abnormalities of surface texture, skin temperature, body segment contour, muscle tone, and joint movement.
- Sufficient position, movement and balance sensations to assist and safely guard (protect) patients who are walking, exercising or performing other rehabilitation activities.

**Communication:** Candidate must be able to utilize effective and efficient communications with peers, faculty, patients and their families, and other health care providers. This includes, but is not limited to-

- Ability to read at a competency level that allows one to safely carry out the essential functions of an assignment (examples: handwritten chart data, printed equipment operations manuals).
- Ability to effectively communicate (interpret and express) information regarding the status, safety, and rehabilitation of patients.
- Ability to effectively communicate (verbally and document) with patients/families, health care professionals, within the community, and with reimbursement payers.
- Ability to communicate and document effectively via computer.
- Ability to recognize, interpret, and respond to nonverbal behavior of self and others.

**Behavior:** Candidate must be capable of exercising good judgment, developing empathetic and therapeutic relationships with patients and others, and tolerating close and direct physical contact with a broad and very diverse population of laboratory colleagues and patients. This will include people of all ages, races, socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds, as well as individuals with weight disorders, physical disfigurement and medical or mental health problems. This also includes, but is not limited to-

- Ability to work with multiple patients/families and colleagues at the same time.
- Ability to work with lab partners, patients, families and others under stressful conditions, including but not limited to medically or emotionally unstable individuals, situations requiring rapid adaptations, the provision of CPR, or other emergency interventions.
- Ability to prioritize multiple tasks, integrate information and make decisions.
- Ability to foster cooperative and collegial relationships with classmates, instructors, other health care providers, patients and their families.

**Critical Thinking:** Candidate must possess sufficient abilities in the areas of calculation, critical problem solving, reasoning, and judgment to be able to comprehend and process information within the time frame of a session of physical therapy interventions. Candidate must be able to prioritize, organize and attend to tasks and responsibilities efficiently. This includes, but is not limited to-

- Ability to collect, interpret and analyze written, verbal and observed data about patients.
- Ability to prioritize multiple tasks, integrate information and make decisions.
- Ability to apply knowledge of the principles, indications, and contraindications for physical therapy interventions, including those for therapeutic interventions related to human pathology and disability, therapeutic modalities, therapeutic massage, pulmonary hygiene, physical and functional measures, and for therapeutic exercise.
- Ability to act safely and ethically in the physical therapy lab and clinic.

The capstone experiences of this educational program occurs during the summer semester and final semester, with the candidate providing physical therapy interventions in clinic settings under the supervision of physical therapists. The candidate must have the capacity to complete eight hour days, and 40 hour weeks, of participation in three clinical education experiences which run for six weeks each. The clinical education experience provides for a truly integrative measure of the candidate's capabilities. Modification to the clinic's work schedule is at the discretion of the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Experience (ACCE).

People with disabilities who are otherwise-qualified will not be denied admission to the program if they can perform these essential functions with reasonable accommodations.

Candidates to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program who have questions or concerns about these requirements are encouraged to contact the director of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program. The director can be called at (603) 542-7744 extension 419, or contacted via email at [lclute@ccsnh.edu](mailto:lclute@ccsnh.edu).

I \_\_\_\_\_ can perform the essential functions listed above:  
(student name)

- \_\_\_\_\_ with reasonable accommodations
- \_\_\_\_\_ without reasonable accommodations

Candidates for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program are required to certify that these standards have been provided to them, and any questions have been addressed.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

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

## APPLICANT REFERENCE FORM

**INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANT:** Please fill in your name and program, and give this form to a person (preferably an employer or teacher) whom you feel has known you for a length of time and can adequately evaluate your potential for career training at our college. Reference(s) are required **PRIOR TO** consideration for admission. Please also sign the Waiver of Confidentiality on the reverse side of you wish to waive your right to review this form.

\_\_\_\_\_ is applying for admission to \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Applicant's Name) (Name of Program)  
 program at this college. Your thoughtful and frank estimate of this candidate's qualification will be most helpful in consideration for admission and will be treated as confidential if waived by the applicant and used only by the Admissions Committee of this college. Please feel free to add any comments you may desire.

	<b>CANDIDATE'S PERSONAL APPRAISAL</b>	<b>Better Than Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>	<b>Entirely Unsatisfactory</b>
1.	Is the applicant a hard worker?				
2.	Is the applicant a good producer?				
3.	Is the applicant enthusiastic?				
4.	Is the applicant resourceful?				
5.	Is the applicant ambitious?				
6.	Is the applicant courteous?				
7.	Is the applicant understanding?				
8.	How is the applicant's memory?				
9.	How is the applicant's health?				
10.	How are the applicant's habits?				
	<b>CANDIDATE'S QUALITIES</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
11.	Personality				
12.	Dependability				
13.	Appearance				
14.	Manners				
15.	Judgement				
16.	Promptness				
17.	Attitude				
18.	Cooperation				
19.	Ability to learn new things				
20.	Awareness of the feelings of others				

**(OVER)**

We would appreciate, also, any comments you may have regarding this applicant's honesty, integrity, and direction:

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How suitable is this applicant for a career in: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of program)

\_\_\_\_\_ Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_ Very Good    \_\_\_\_\_ Fair    \_\_\_\_\_ Poor

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position/Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IF YOU ARE THE APPLICANT'S EMPLOYER, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:**

Date of applicant's employment: \_\_\_\_\_ (month/year) to \_\_\_\_\_ (month/year)

Position Held: \_\_\_\_\_ Quality of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Leaving: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you Re-employ: \_\_\_\_\_ If Not, Why: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**WAIVER OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

**Applicant:** If you wish to waive your right to review this reference, please sign the statement below.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ wish to waive my right to review this reference form after it has been completed.

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(If applicant is under 18)

**PLEASE RETURN TO:**

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One College Drive  
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\_\_\_\_\_ is applying for admission to \_\_\_\_\_  
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**(OVER)**

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(Name of program)

\_\_\_\_\_ Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_ Very Good    \_\_\_\_\_ Fair    \_\_\_\_\_ Poor

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position/Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Date of applicant's employment: \_\_\_\_\_ (month/year) to \_\_\_\_\_ (month/year)

Position Held: \_\_\_\_\_ Quality of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Leaving: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you Re-employ: \_\_\_\_\_ If Not, Why: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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