



UNIVERSITY OF  
MARY HARDIN-BAYLOR  
DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

## ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS STATEMENT

Physical therapy is a demanding profession that requires a wide range of cognitive, sensory, and motor skills. A physical therapist is expected to independently perform all aspects of the physical therapy role. Core segments of the program include clinical experiences in which the student will be required to participate in and demonstrate proficiency in providing therapeutic services. Graduates of the UMHB DPT program who pass the licensure examination will be prepared to enter practice in a variety of settings and perform all responsibilities of the professional role. Based upon the expectations and requirements of the profession, this Essential Functions Statement includes a list of essential functions/skills that must be met for entry into the program and progression through the program. The following list of skills is illustrative and does not represent an all-inclusive listing of the functions of a physical therapist. Reasonable accommodations may be requested to enable an individual with disabilities to achieve these essential functions.

### **The Doctor of Physical Therapy Student must possess:**

**Observational skills (including vision, hearing, and somatic sensation) sufficient to perceive all information necessary for effective patient/client management inclusive of functional use of vision, hearing, olfaction and tactile sensations.**

- Observe lecture and laboratory demonstrations
- Read and interpret equipment dials, assessment graphs, patient charts, professional literature, and notes from patients, physicians, and other health professionals
- Effectively evaluate auditory information during assessment of lungs, heart, pulses, blood pressure, and joints.
- Observe another individual at a distance greater than 20 feet as well as near proximity and be able to notice movement patterns, facial expressions, etc.
- Monitor and assess physical, emotional, and psychological responses of another individual
- Determine and comprehend dimensional and spatial relationships of structures
- View video, graphics and written word on the computer screen or DVD monitor
- Perform a physical assessment through hands-on application that may include palpation of anatomical structures, assessment of muscle tone, temperature, depth, etc.
- Monitor and interact with patients, other professionals and families through a variety of media
- Hear and react appropriately to alarms, emergency signals, timers and cries for help
- Hear verbal instructions, audio, video, DVD or computer media in the classroom, lab or clinic

**Communication ability sufficient to appropriately communicate in verbal, nonverbal, and written formats with all individuals when engaged in physical therapy practice, research, and education, including patients, clients, families, care givers, practitioners, consumers, payers, and policy makers.**

- Receive, write and interpret written and verbal communication in a timely manner
- Effectively communicate with other individuals
- Use appropriate verbal, nonverbal, and written communication
- Demonstrate interpersonal skills as needed for productive classroom discussion, respectful interaction with classmates and faculty, and development of appropriate therapist-patient relationships.

**Motor ability sufficient to safely perform the job of a physical therapist in a wide variety of settings.**

- Move within rooms and from room to room, including maneuvering in small spaces around equipment and other individuals
- Move up and down stairs/ramps/curbs with other individuals
- Perform a thorough examination of another individual, including but not limited to palpation, auscultation, percussion, movement of limbs and spinal segments, and manipulation of tools commonly used for screening/testing
- Perform interventions on another individual, including but not limited to moving another individual's body parts; moving another individual's body for transfers, gait, positioning, mobilization; moving, maneuvering, applying and adjusting clinical equipment; and effectively guiding, facilitating, inhibiting, and resisting movement and motor patterns
- Perform assessment and intervention techniques with proper positioning, hand placement, direction and amount of force
- Transfer, move, and assist another individual in walking and other daily activities without injury to other or self
- Participate in lecture, lab, and other learning activities for 30+ hours per week, including but not limited to maintaining an upright posture for prolonged periods
- Legibly record information for academic and clinical learning and patient care activities, including but not limited to written assignments, exams, evaluations, progress notes, and other required materials in a medical record
- Perform specific physical tasks, including but not limited to lifting up to 50 pounds, twisting, bending, stooping, squatting, crawling, reaching above shoulder level, kneeling/half-kneeling, pushing/pulling, using hands repetitively, grasping, demonstrating manual and finger dexterity, and coordinating verbal/manual instruction

**Intellectual-conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities sufficient to use integrative and quantitative abilities and make decisions. These cognitive skills are critical for the physical therapist to make clinical decisions during the examination, evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, and intervention activities for patient/client management. Students must be able to:**

- Apply critical thinking processes to his/her work in the classroom and clinical settings
- Retain and use information in order to solve problems, evaluate patients, and generate new ways of processing or categorizing symptoms
- Organize, prioritize, analyze, and evaluate detailed and complex information within a limited time frame

**Behavioral and social skills sufficient to**

- Fully use his/her intellectual ability, exercise good judgment, and complete all responsibilities related to the academic and clinical requirements of the program
- Comply with the ethical standards of the profession
- Cope with the mental and emotional rigors of a demanding educational program within the set time constraints
- Acknowledge and respect individual values and opinions in order to foster harmonious working relationships with others
- Accurately self-assess abilities, accept criticism, and assume responsibility for maintaining professional behavior
- Cope with the stress of heavy workloads, demanding patients, and critical clinical situations while continuing to function effectively
- Interact appropriately with individuals from all areas of society, cultures, norms, ethnic backgrounds, and belief systems

**Lab and Classroom Exercises:** Students will practice various therapeutic techniques in the course of required lab and, occasionally, lecture or classroom courses. In order to provide students both a complete perspective on various therapies and the opportunity to practice, students are expected to practice physical therapy techniques on one another. Any required participation in such exercises will be under the supervision of university faculty, instructors, or clinicians. Any student who is uncomfortable with any classroom or lab exercise should discuss his or her concern with the DPT Program Director.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT**

I acknowledge that I am able to perform the Essential Functions identified above with or without reasonable accommodations. If I require any accommodation, I understand that it is my responsibility to contact the university's Director of Counseling, Testing and Health Services and comply with the University's policy on requesting accommodations.

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Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
UMHB Student ID #

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Original: Student's education record in the DPT Program

Copy: Student