Physical Therapist Assistant
APPLICATION FOR FALL PROGRAM

Application Deadline: First Friday in May
Classes Begin: August

For more information
IRSC Information Call Center
1-866-792-4772

www.irsc.edu
INDIAN RIVER STATE COLLEGE is a public, comprehensive college with a nationally recognized commitment to helping students succeed. The College was selected out of 1,000 colleges nationwide as a Finalist with Distinction for the prestigious 2017 Aspen Prize for Excellence and has been designated an Achieving the Dream™ Leader College for support of students from enrollment to employment. Over 30,000 people enroll in IRSC courses each year, attracted by the College’s combination of quality, convenience and affordable tuition. IRSC is designated as the 3rd Most Affordable College in the country by the U.S. Department of Education, and students benefit from many scholarship and financial aid opportunities.

Every aspect of IRSC is focused on helping students succeed with small classes, an array of student support services, convenient campuses, and online courses. IRSC offers over 100 programs, including Bachelor’s degrees, Associate in Arts degrees for continuing education at IRSC or a university, Associate in Science degrees for in-demand careers after two years of training, short-term certificate programs and Quick Job Training.

EA/EO

Indian River State College provides equal employment and educational opportunities to all without regard to race, color, national origin, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, genetic information, and any other factor protected under applicable federal, state, and local civil rights laws, rules and regulations. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies:

Adriene B. Jefferson
Equity Officer/Title IX Coordinator
IRSC Main Campus • 3209 Virginia Ave. • Fort Pierce, FL 34981
(772) 462-7156

ACCREDITATION

The Physical Therapist Assistant program at Indian River State College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)
1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314
Phone: (703) 706-3245 • Email: accreditation@apta.org
website: www.capteonline.org

Physical Therapist Assistant Licensure

Successful completion of the Physical Therapist Assistant program at Indian River State College leads to an Associate in Science Degree. Graduates are eligible for application to take the Florida Jurisprudence Examination and the licensing examination given by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy http://www.fsbpt.org

Upon satisfactory achievement of examinations, graduates become Florida licensed Physical Therapist Assistants. The Florida Board of Physical Therapy and Florida Department of Health Division Medical Quality Assurance are the agencies authorized to issue credentials and licenses in the Physical Therapy profession. Direct questions regarding licensure application to the Florida Department of Health at http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- The Physical Therapist Assistant ........................................................................................................ 1
- Application Checklist ............................................................................................................................ 1
- Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 3
- Information Sessions ............................................................................................................................ 3
- Application Procedures ......................................................................................................................... 3
- Application Deadline Date .................................................................................................................... 4
- Applicant Review .................................................................................................................................. 4
- Criteria for Selection ............................................................................................................................. 5
- Acceptance into Program ....................................................................................................................... 6
- Criminal Background Checks ............................................................................................................... 6
- Non-Acceptance into Program ............................................................................................................... 8
- Program Expenses ............................................................................................................................... 8
- Financial Aid/Scholarships ................................................................................................................... 8
- Program Curriculum ............................................................................................................................. 9
- Performance Standards ......................................................................................................................... 9
- Job Outlook ........................................................................................................................................... 11
- Frequently Ask Questions .................................................................................................................... 12
- Additional Considerations:
  - Transfer Possibilities ...................................................................................................................... 13

## Forms:

- Physical Therapy Experience Form .................................................................................................... 17
The following items are found in the *Health Science Division Student Handbook.*

(This list has been updated as of 6/18.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Health Science Division Purpose Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Health Science Statement of Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health Science Plagiarism Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Email/Contact Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Health Science Use of Electronic Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Health Science Confidentiality Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Health Science Grading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Health Science Retention Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Health Science Probation Regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Health Science Readmission and Dismissal Regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Health Science Complaint Guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Health Science Liability, Accident and Insurance Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Health Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Indian River State College Health Science Post Exposure Protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Health Science Background Check Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Health Science Substance Abuse Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Health Science Dress Code/Professional Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Health Science Student Parking Regulation</td>
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PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) is an educated individual who works under the direction and supervision of a Physical Therapist. Duties of the assistant include relieving pain and/or increasing function in clients/patients through the use of therapeutic application of heat, light, water, electricity, sound, massage, exercise, gait and functional activity. Physical therapist assistants practice in a variety of health care settings, including hospitals, ambulatory health clinics, home health, private practices, specialized clinics, schools and institutions of higher education, research centers, industries, wellness and fitness centers, health maintenance organizations, extended-care facilities and nursing homes.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Note: All required forms are available in the back of this booklet.

_____ 1. Complete the online IRSC Application for Admission at www.irsc.edu.
_____ 2. See an advisor for information on General Education pre-requisites and transferability for program admission.
_____ 3. Complete the Health Science Program Application online at www.irsc.edu and pay the $30 fee by deadline. Fees are non-refundable.
_____ 4. Request high school and/or college(s) to forward official transcript(s) to the IRSC Admissions Office by application deadline date.
_____ 5. Complete and return the enclosed Physical Therapy Experience Form to the Health Science Department by application deadline.
_____ 6. Student must have minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA within the courses allocated for points.

All Physical Therapist Assistant program applications will be reviewed after the application deadline. Students will be notified by the Health Science Division of their provisional acceptance into the program via RiverMail. At that point, students will receive instructions on final acceptance and when to complete a drug/background screening/physical exam. Do not proceed with drug/background screening or physical until notified.

_____ I. Submit form and payment of $100 to the Main Campus Cashier IRSC to cover mandatory drug screening and a national criminal background check (fingerprinting).
_____ II. Submit Physical Exam Form complete with immunizations documented (Visit www.irsc.edu. Click on Programs & Careers. In the Divisions box, check Health Sciences/How to Apply. In the HANDBOOKS/FORMS box, select Health Science Physical Examination and Immunization Form).
_____ III. Proof of Personal Health Insurance.

Satisfactory results of these requirements must be on file in the Health Science Division Office before receiving final acceptance. Students will then be issued a final acceptance letter with information regarding orientation to the program and registering for classes.

Completion of this checklist alone does not guarantee acceptance to the Physical Therapist Assistant program. Students are selected on a competitive basis.

(MAKE A COPY OF ALL FORMS SUBMITTED FOR YOUR OWN FILES.)
INTRODUCTION

The Indian River State College Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program has been selected as a national model for top-quality education due to its success in incorporating real-world experience to prepare students for career success. After an extensive review of all aspects of the program and an on-site visit by a team of experts, the National Dissemination Center for Career and Technical Education (CTE) designated the IRSC program as “exemplary.” The College’s PTA program earned the exemplary rating in all ten categories including effectiveness, innovation and program quality and was commended for evaluating students in specific patient care skills and their professional behavior.

The Physical Therapist Assistant program is offered through the IRSC Health Science Division. All applicants enter this program through a Selective Admissions process. Contact Educational Services, any IRSC campus or the Health Science Division at (772) 462-7550 for specific requirements and deadlines.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Students interested in applying to any health science program should plan to attend the appropriate, regularly scheduled, program information session for direction and assistance with the application process. The information session addresses any questions or concerns prospective applicants may have. The session also assists students in understanding how to achieve a “qualified” applicant status. No reservations or fees are required to attend.

Physical Therapist Assistant Information Sessions are held at the
Main Campus PT Center behind the gym
1st Thursday of each month
Building P, Room 116
5:00 p.m.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Any candidate who wishes to be considered for the Physical Therapist Assistant program at Indian River State College must complete the procedures listed on Page 1 “Application Checklist”. It is the student’s responsibility to see that admission requirements are met. No notices will be sent. Additional program specifics are outlined in this booklet.

NOTE: If at any time during the application process you have a change of address or other personal information, submit this information to the Educational Services Division on any IRSC campus and notify the Health Science Division at (772) 462-7550. This will expedite notification of acceptance status.
PROCESS FOR APPLYING ONLINE

1. Go to the IRSC website at www.irsc.edu
2. Click Register & Pay and then sign into MyIRSC
3. Sign in using your Student ID and pin number
4. Go to Registration (blue menu bar) and select Health Science Application
5. Place a check mark in the “I Agree” statement.
6. In the Health Science Program box, select Physical Therapist Assistant. Application Deadline: this automatically fills in the program deadline date.
7. Select Submit. Select OK
8. Select Pay Fee Now and then PAY NOW
9. Select process for payment
10. Select $30 application fee
11. Enter credit card details
12. Submit Payment

Applicants can check the status of their application by logging into MYIRSC at www.irsc.edu. All applicants will be notified of their status after the deadline date via RiverMail. No information is available by telephone. To finalize acceptance, once notified of provisional acceptance, students will be required to have a completed IRSC physical examination form, a negative drug screen report and a FDLE background check prior to the first day of class.

APPLICATION DEADLINE DATE

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APPLICANT REVIEW

Educational Services must receive the completed applicant files including all official transcripts from IRSC and/or other institutions and/or a final high school transcript by the posted application deadline date. No documentation will be considered after the application deadline date. All of the above criteria must be met or the applicant file will not be reviewed and scored.

Note: Students are selected on a competitive basis. Meeting admission criteria does not guarantee acceptance into the program.
CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Factors utilized by the Admissions Committee include but are not necessarily limited to:

A. **Academic Record** - Past academic performance and grade point average earned in the General Education and required specialized electives of the PTA Curriculum are indicative of the probability of an applicant's completing the academic portion of the program successfully. It is recommended for students to complete as many of the following courses as possible, especially math and science, before applying to the program. (Students must have an overall cumulative GPA of a 3.0 of the following courses.)

   - BSC 2093 Anatomy and Physiology I
   - BSC 2093L Anatomy and Physiology I Lab
   - BSC 2094 Anatomy and Physiology II
   - BSC 2094L Anatomy and Physiology II Lab
   - PHY 1020 or higher Principles of Physics
   - HSC 2531 Medical Terminology I

**POINT ALLOCATION**

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<th>Quality Points Credits x Grade</th>
<th>Weighing Factor</th>
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**Instructions:**

- Total Credits: Add up only the credits that you have taken
- Numerical Grades: A = 4, B = 3, C = 2
- Total Quality Points: Multiply grade by credits for each course, then add up this column
- GPA: Cumulative GPA within the courses allocated for points.
- Total Points: Multiply quality points for each course by the weighting factor for that course, then add up this column and add GPA

B. **Motivation and Knowledge of the Field** - Students who know the most about what physical therapists/physical therapist assistants do are most likely to take maximum advantage of the educational opportunities in physical therapist assistant school. Thirty hours of observational/volunteer/actual work experience hours are required. It is the responsibility of the applicant to retain a copy of the observation experience form for their personal records and/or resubmission of form for application purposes at a later date.
ACCEPTANCE INTO PROGRAM

The Physical Therapist Assistant program admits twenty-four students annually to the Fall semester. Selected students will be notified by the Health Science Division of their provisional acceptance into the program 4-6 weeks after the application deadline date through RiverMail. Final acceptance into the program is contingent upon satisfactory results from a physical examination, drug screen and Florida Department of Law Enforcement background check. Information on obtaining these tests/reports will be provided in the provisional acceptance notification package. These reports should not be submitted with initial application materials.

Drug Screening & Criminal Background Checks
Refer to the IRSC website at www.irsc.edu. Click Programs & Careers. In the Divisions box, Health Sciences/How to Apply. In the HANDBOOKS/FORMS box, select Background Check and Drug Screening Requirements.

The Florida Board of Physical Therapy and Florida Department of Health Division of Medical Quality Assurance requires any licensure applicant who has ever been convicted or found guilty of a felony, regardless of adjudication, to explain the circumstances.

Health/Medical Record
A completed medial health form must also be submitted and approved by the Program Director. This health record will contain results from a physical examination and laboratory tests including immunization records.

Applicants who do not meet the standards of good physical and mental health, as required by clinical facilities for safe patient care, may reapply and be considered for application to a Health Science program after resolution of the health problem. An updated health record, verified by a licensed physician, physician’s assistant or an ARNP must be submitted.

Indian River State College and partnering clinical sites require all health science students who register for clinical courses to have personal health insurance. Students will be asked to show proof of personal health insurance by presenting their insurance policy number, the name of the insurance provider and the telephone number of the provider to clinical preceptors or administrators. If students do not have health insurance or do not provide proof of health insurance, they will not be eligible for clinic rotation which will result in termination from program. Personal health insurance may be purchased through the Health and Wellness Department. Call them at (772) 462-7825 for more information.

Student Drug Screen, Background Check, and Medical Records
When submitted, these records will become the property of the College, and will not be available for copying or for use to meet the requirements of outside employers. Students who are out of the program for six months or more must submit new records.

Complaint Process
Refer to the Academic Review/Admission Policy located in the IRSC Student Handbook/Planner.

NON-ACCEPTANCE INTO PROGRAM

Applicants who do not qualify for the program will be notified and may call the Health Science Office at (772) 462-7550 for clarification on how to strengthen their application.
PROGRAM EXPENSES

A list of approximate costs is located on the IRSC website at www.irsc.edu. Click Programs & Careers and then Health Sciences/How to Apply. Click Physical Therapist Assistant. In the Program Information box, select Program Expenses. In addition to these costs, the candidate should allow for room, board, transportation and personal living expenses. Note that non-Florida resident tuition is a higher rate per credit hour, which will increase total fees accordingly.

FINANCIAL AID/SCHOLARSHIPS

Financial Aid (grants, loans, work-study) is available to those who qualify. Complete the FAFSA and IRSC Supplemental Financial Aid Application to determine eligibility. For more information, contact the IRSC Financial Aid Office at (772) 462-7450 or toll-free at 1-866-900-3243 (FAID).

Scholarships designated for students in the Health Science programs may also be available. Complete the IRSC “STARS” ONLINE Scholarship Application, available at www.irscfoundation.org.

For more information regarding the scholarships listed above, contact the IRSC Foundation Office at (772) 462-4786, or toll-free at 1-866-792-4772, ext. 4786. Further scholarship information is also available online at www.irscfoundation.org (click on “Scholarships”).

PROGRAM CURRICULUM

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM
(74 credits) Selective Admission

Refer to the IRSC website at www.irsc.edu. Click Programs & Careers and then Health Sciences/How to Apply. Choose Physical Therapist Assistant. In the Program Information box, select Guided Pathway.

Completion of an accredited Physical Therapist Assistant program leads to an Associate in Science Degree. The schedule of a Physical Therapist Assistant is rigorous. The PTA program incorporates a working physical therapy and wellness center providing students hands on training in the assessment and treatment of patients, requiring additional hours outside of scheduled class time. Due to the time required for attending lectures, laboratories, and clinical assignments, plus the time necessary for study and practice, students are encouraged to minimize outside work commitments during the time they are enrolled in the program.
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Physical Requirement (Essential Functions)

The rights of students with disabilities which pertain to post-secondary education are provided under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. These laws prohibit discrimination by institutions to “otherwise qualified” students with disabilities. This enables such students to have an equal opportunity to benefit from the education offered by those institutions.

The role of the Physical Therapist Assistant in the various health care settings requires academic, physical, mental and environmental work/demands. To be successful as a PTA student and PTA graduate, the following requirements are expected to be performed safely, ethically and legally under the supervision of a physical therapist.

Academic
- Graduate of an accredited Physical Therapist Assistant program achieving an Associate of Science Degree.
- Obtain State Licensure to practice in Florida.

Physical
- Demonstrate coordination of small and large muscle groups to provide safe and effective care including transfers, ambulation, and positioning of patient/client using minimum, moderate and maximum assistance techniques.
- Ability to sit, stand and walk for extended periods of time (3-5 hours), negotiating environmental barriers safely with a patient/client.
- Utilize movement to perform proper body mechanics of all patient/client treatment techniques and related procedures (i.e. stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, reaching and handling).
- Perform medium work, defined from Realistic Assessment of Vocational Experiences (RAVE) "exerting 20-50 pounds of force occasionally, or 10-25 pounds of force frequently, or greater than negligible up to 10 pounds of force constantly to move objects."
- Perform range of motion and graded manual resistance of patient/client with poor balance and weakened muscle groups on uneven surfaces, inclines, declines, stairs, curbs, etc.
- Perform manual hand dexterity and coordination to manipulate and calibrate equipment, (dials, probes, ultrasound heads, switches, scissors, tweezers, etc.) individually or simultaneously for modality and wound procedures.
- Respond to auditory emergency medical situations sufficiently with patients/clients (i.e. hearing monitor alarms, emergency signals, CPR, ausculatory sounds, verbal communication, etc.).
- Assess and observe patient/client condition (blood pressure and heart rate, respiration, etc.) response to treatment including near and far acuity (up to 10 feet away recognizing color discrimination).
- Perform physical assessment of structure, size, shape, and muscle tone through tactile ability of fingerling and feeling (palpation).
Mental
- Demonstrate sufficient and accurate use of verbal, non-verbal and written communication effectively with staff, patient/client, and families concerning treatment procedures.
- Receive and interpret verbal, nonverbal and written communication skills effectively with other health care providers.
- Ability to manage and function emotionally during stresses of an intensive academic training program for preparation of clinical situations with a variety of patients/clients (terminally ill, psychosocial responses of disabled individuals and families, etc.).
- Respect patient/client/family confidentiality.
- Ability to make appropriate judgments and decisions by set priorities in clinical situations.

Environmental
- Demonstrate the ability to apply universal precautions including the use of personal protective equipment (rubber gloves, gown, goggles, masks, etc.) when indicated.

LATEX ADVISORY – Latex based products are used in all health care facilities.

Indian River State College strives to provide reasonable accommodations as necessary to allow a PTA student to be successful. Contact the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Department Chair and Student Disabilities Services following acceptance to the program and before the first day of classes in the Fall Semester to declare your need for reasonable accommodations.

JOB OUTLOOK

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov), employment of physical therapist assistants is expected to grow much faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2024. Demand for physical therapist assistants will continue to rise, in accordance with the increasing number of individuals with disabilities or limited function. The growing elderly population is particularly vulnerable to chronic and debilitating conditions that require therapeutic services. These patients often need additional assistance in their treatment, making the roles of assistants vital. The large baby-boom generation is entering the prime age for heart attacks and strokes, further increasing the demand for cardiac and physical rehabilitation. In addition, future medical developments should permit an increased percentage of trauma victims to survive, creating added demand for therapy services.

Physical therapists are expected to increasingly utilize assistants to reduce the cost of physical therapy services. Once a patient is evaluated and a treatment plan is designed by the physical therapist, the physical therapist assistant can provide many aspects of treatment, as prescribed by the therapist.

Physical therapist assistants with prior experience working in a physical therapy office or other health care setting will have the best job opportunities.

Entry-level graduates can expect beginning salaries ranging from $32,000-$36,000, depending on geographical areas.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I am a junior in high school interested in the Physical Therapist Assistant Degree program. What can I do to prepare for acceptance while still in high school?

Students pursuing the career of a Physical Therapist Assistant should have a background in the life sciences, (including biology and anatomy), interact well with others and have a general interest in the prevention of disease and maintenance/restoration of the quality of life. A high school diploma from an accredited high school or GED is required. The following courses are recommended at the secondary (high school) level:

- Math through Algebra II
- Four years of science (including biology, anatomy, and physiology)
- English Composition

High school students should contact their high school guidance counselor and the IRSC PTA Program Department Chair for advisement concerning dual-enrollment opportunities.

Where do students participate in their clinical training?
The Physical Therapist Assistant program is affiliated with clinical facilities located within the IRSC service area including Martin, Indian River, St. Lucie and Okeechobee counties. The program also has clinical agreements with facilities in Brevard and Palm Beach counties. Students are responsible for transportation to and from the clinical site to which they are assigned.

Are there any other requirements once a student is accepted?
Upon acceptance into the Physical Therapist Assistant program, each student is required to have malpractice and accident insurance annually. These will be included in the course fees. Students are required to have health insurance to enter the program.

Students accepted into the program must provide evidence of certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) at the healthcare provider level in accordance with the curriculum of the American Heart Association PRIOR to the first day of class in the Fall Semester.

Students admitted into the program must have a complete medical examination of their current health status by a licensed physician. Immunizations, tests and health verification must be included. Final acceptance into the program is contingent upon satisfactory results from a physical examination, drug screen and Florida Department of Law Enforcement background check.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Senior College/University Transfer Possibilities
All Doctorate of Physical Therapy Programs require a Baccalaureate Degree and additional perquisites to be considered for entrance. If a student is interested in earning a DPT, individual programs should be contacted to determine his/her prerequisites and other requirements for admission. Generally, institutions will accept the general education course credits earned from Indian River State College or other institutions toward a Baccalaureate Degree.
THE FOLLOWING FORMS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION TO THE PTA PROGRAM
Prospective PTA students are required to observe the typical responsibilities and duties of a Physical Therapist Assistant. THE MINIMUM PERIOD FOR ADMISSION INTO THE PROGRAM IS 30 HOURS. This may be achieved through OBSERVATION, VOLUNTEER SERVICE and/or PAID EMPLOYMENT in physical therapy departments. Experience in two or more settings is recommended. (It is recommended that you contact physical therapy departments/health care agencies in your geographical area to confirm their availability.)

ATTIRE FOR THE OBSERVATION

Business attire and comfortable shoes (no sneakers or high heels). (slacks and dress shirt)

THE FACILITY HAS THE RIGHT TO DECLINE YOUR OBSERVATION IF YOU ARE NOT PROPERLY DRESSED.

BRING THE PHYSICAL THERAPY EXPERIENCE FORM WITH YOU TO THE PHYSICAL THERAPY FACILITY. FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF YOUR 30 OBSERVATION HOURS, RETURN FORM TO:

Health Science Department  
Indian River State College  
3209 Virginia Avenue  
Fort Pierce, FL 34981-5596  
(772) 462-7550
PHYSICAL THERAPY EXPERIENCE FORM

PRINT CLEARLY
NAME: ____________________________________________________________
ADDRESS: ______________________________________________________________________
CITY: _____________________________ STATE: _______________  ZIP: __________________
PHONE: ____________________________  STUDENT I.D. NUMBER: ________________

NAME OF EMPLOYER: _____________________________________________________________

I. OBSERVATION at a Physical Therapy Department (List only departments you visited for four hours or more).

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II. VOLUNTEER SERVICE with a Physical Therapy Department.

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III. PAID EMPLOYMENT with a Physical Therapy Department.

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When submitted, these records will become the property of the College and will not be available for copying or for use to meet the requirements of outside employers. Make a copy of this form for your records.

Mail To: Health Science Department
Indian River State College
3209 Virginia Avenue
Fort Pierce, FL 34981-5596
(772) 462-7550