The Physical Therapist Assistant program (PTA) reserves the right to make any revisions, deletions, or additions to the regulations or procedures which, in the opinion of the faculty and/or Indian River State College, serves in the best interest of the program and its students.

Revised July 2016

IRSC is an EA/EO educational institution.
PREFACE

Indian River State College offers a Physical Therapist Assistant program leading to a two-year Associate in Science Degree preparing students to provide best practices in rehabilitation with a solid evidence-based educational foundation. The program is designed to provide students with the basic physical therapy knowledge, procedures and related tasks to assist the supervising Physical Therapist in a variety of healthcare settings. This is a professional program, and students are expected to conduct themselves ethically and professionally as in the role of the physical therapist assistant, demonstrating the “preferred relationship” with the physical therapist. (Refer to: APTA Code of Ethics for the Physical Therapist, APTA Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant, APTA Guide for Professional conduct [APTA], The Guide for Conduct of the Physical Therapist Assistant [APTA], Standards of Practice for Physical Therapy [APTA], Florida Laws and Rules [FS-486 Physical Therapy Practice Act]).

Students accepted in the program are regarded as mature, responsible individuals seeking a formal education in the field of physical therapy. Students must maintain a professional behavior and appearance during all classes, laboratories, scheduled field trips and/or any situation in which the student is identifiable as an Indian River State College Physical Therapist Assistant program student, whether on campus or in the community. Students are not considered employees of the program’s designated clinical education sites or facilities. This handbook has been prepared to inform the student of the regulations and requirements of this educational endeavor; however, the regulations and requirements contained herein are subject to revision at any time and may be modified at the discretion of the Physical Therapist Assistant program faculty and/or Indian River State College administration as deemed necessary.

The Physical Therapist Assistant program at Indian River State College is an Exemplary Program designated in 2002 by the National Dissemination Center for Career and Technical Education (CTE).

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
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(This list has been updated as of 3/16.)

1. Health Science Division Purpose Statement  
2. Health Science Statement of Ethics  
3. Health Science Plagiarism Regulation  
4. Email/Contact Information  
5. Health Science Use of Electronic Regulation  
6. Health Science Confidentiality Statement  
7. Health Science Grading  
8. Health Science Retention Regulation  
9. Health Science Probation Regulation  
10. Health Science Readmission and Dismissal Regulation  
11. Health Science Complaint Guidelines  
12. Health Science Liability, Accident and Insurance Regulation  
13. Health Requirements  
14. Indian River State College Health Science Post Exposure Protocol  
15. Health Science Background Check Regulation  
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18. Health Science Student Parking Regulation  
19. Health Science Student Smoking Regulation
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Indian River State College (IRSC) Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA) program in the College of Health Sciences. Many of the program’s regulations, procedures and general student responsibilities are included in this manual. Additional college policies and procedures are included in the Health Science Student Handbook and are available for reference online. Regardless of whether the policies and procedures are cited in this handbook, you are responsible for your academic progression and behavior in the classroom and clinic, and you must adhere to all College policies and procedures.

If you have any questions regarding the PTA program, please do not hesitate to contact a program faculty member or the appropriate IRSC office. We are pleased that you have selected the PTA program at Indian River State College. We, the faculty, are here to assist in whatever capacity we can to help you be successful in reaching your academic and professional goals.
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PURPOSE STATEMENT AND GOALS OF THE PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the Physical Therapist Assistant program is to promote the academic and professional growth of PTA students and effectively prepare entry level clinicians to meet the health care needs of the community in today’s ever-changing, culturally diverse healthcare field and beyond.

GOALS

The PTA program at IRSC seeks to implement its purpose with the following goals:

1. To enroll prospective students who meet high standards in areas of academic record, leadership, desire to pursue a career in physical therapy, and commitment to the philosophy of lifelong learning.

2. To offer a comprehensive current entry-level curriculum that reflects today’s practice and prepares students to become exemplary physical therapist assistants capable of providing services in a variety of healthcare environments and employment opportunities.

3. To provide sufficient and high quality resources to enhance academic and clinical experiences in order to stimulate student learning.

4. To prepare entry-level physical therapist assistant graduates to meet program learning outcomes designed to meet the needs of the community as determined through ongoing program assessment.

5. To facilitate the professional development of students, faculty, graduates, and physical therapy professions in the community and to enhance and promote values-based behavior within the physical therapy profession as well as within the greater health care community.
GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT LICENSURE

Successful completion of the Physical Therapist Assistant program at Indian River State College leads to an Associate in Science Degree. Program graduates are eligible for state licensure and graduates seeking licensure must meet the specific requirements of a particular state. Program graduates seeking licensure in the state of Florida are eligible to take the Florida Jurisprudence Examination and the national 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. Refer questions regarding licensure applications to the Florida Department of Health at http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

The confidentiality of the student’s record is protected by the College and Physical Therapist Assistant program. Information will be released only to authorized members of the College community. A student may authorize the program to release information regarding their academic record to outside sources upon written consent. (Refer to Appendices for the Authorization to Release Reference Information.)

Written consent is required for persons (students, patients/clients, etc.) to appear in various forms of media, such as videotapes, photographs, films, etc., either on campus or at clinical sites for educational or informational purposes. (Refer to Appendices for Informed Consent for Various Forms of Media.)

ADVISEMENT SERVICES AND FACULTY OFFICE HOURS

The faculty of the Physical Therapist Assistant program provides individual advisement on an appointment basis as well as additional time devoted to advisement during office hours. Faculty office hours are posted outside the door of P119 for the Fall, Spring and Summer terms.

In addition, Indian River State College also has full-time Academic Counselors and Advisor Specialists. If a student is experiencing academic difficulties, the Academic Support Center (ASC) can provide assistance through tutoring, the Writing Center, the Math Lab and Student Success workshops. The ASC can be reached by phone at 772-462-7625 or visit the IRSC ASC Lab. There is also a list of campus and community resources available to students through RiverSupport. RiverSupport resources can provide you with easy access to many different types of services to help you address personal and academic challenges.
SUPPORT SERVICES

Refer to the Indian River State College Catalog for information concerning support services and personnel (e.g., Financial Aid, Child Care, Health and Wellness Center, Student Disabilities Services).

TRANSPORTATION

The student is responsible for travel to campus and from clinical sites and arranged field trips that may or may not be close in proximity to their geographical residences. The Physical Therapist Assistant program affiliates with clinical facilities located within the Martin, Indian River, St. Lucie, Okeechobee, Brevard and Palm Beach counties. Students are responsible for transportation to and from the clinical site to which they are assigned. Students may be required to provide transportation for clinical education related activities for travel to another site or outside the county to meet student needs. (Students will not be allowed to ride with a clinical instructor to another clinical site.) Attendance for Clinical Practice I, II, and III is mandatory. See Clinical Practice I, II and III course syllabi for specific information concerning clinical education regulations.

LIBRARY

The IRSC libraries provide current and comprehensive services to support the academic needs of PTA students. A reserved PTA book collection and additional course resources are maintained within the Library and are available to PTA students.

EMERGENCY AND DISASTER PROCEDURES

Potentially dangerous, threatening or suspicious activities or situations can be reported via:
- Code Blue telephones located at the Main Campus in Fort Pierce
- Dial 7777 on any phone on the Main Campus in Fort Pierce
- Dial (772) 462-4755 to reach the on-duty security officers at the Main Campus in Fort Pierce (24 hours/7 days a week)

FIRE PROCEDURES:

1. All employees and students should be aware of the location of fire alarm equipment.
2. Upon hearing the fire alarm signal, evacuate the building in an orderly manner.
3. Move to an open area away from the building.
4. Evacuate buildings by the route indicated in the emergency plan posted in each occupied room.
5. No one is to return to any building until directed by the proper authority.
HURRICANE/TORNADO/OTHER DISASTERS:

When the four county areas are placed under full hurricane warning or when another type of major disaster occurs, an official cancellation of all classes and College activities will be disseminated via the IRSC website www.irsc.edu, WQCS 88.9FM and news media. The notice regarding resumption of IRSC classes and activities will also be distributed via the IRSC website www.irsc.edu, WQCS (88.9FM), and news media.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The rigorous and complex nature of both lecture and laboratory components of the curriculum demand that specific guidelines be adhered to by students regarding attendance during the academic year. The continuity of patient/client care requires that the student attend all lecture/laboratory sessions.

ATTENDANCE

1. Attendance at all technical lecture/laboratory classes is MANDATORY.
2. The student should be seated and ready to begin class at the designated class time.
   Students will not be permitted to enter the class after it begins - admission will be permitted at the first break. Tardiness is considered unprofessional conduct.
3. If the student is late to class, the student should inform the instructor at the end of the class period indicating a reason for the tardiness.
4. If a student is absent from a class for any reason, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain all lecture/laboratory materials and if necessary, schedule a time to meet with the instructor for specifics. It is also the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of the reason for the absence and obtain substantiating information if requested.
5. Excused absences include the following circumstances:
   - Serious illness of the student: means a condition such as pneumonia, surgery, hospital confinement or valid medical reason. A physician's note verifying illness must be presented by the student upon the faculty member request.
   - Death in the immediate family: will be interpreted to mean mother, father, spouse, child, brother, sister, grandparents or significant other. Documentation must be provided if requested.
   - Statutory governmental responsibilities: refer to such matters as jury duty or subpoena for court appearance. Documentation must be provided if requested.
   - Other circumstances, such as sudden illness of someone under the care of the student, may be considered. Documentation must be provided if requested.
6. If the student misses an exam due to an excused absence or tardiness from extenuating circumstances, the student may take the exam on a date chosen by the instructor. If the student expects to be absent from a given class, the student must contact the instructor directly or by leaving a message for the instructor, [772-462-7771 or 772-462-7772], within an appropriate time prior to the scheduled class time.

7. Unexcused absences include any absence not mentioned above and/or an excused absence with insufficient documentation or failure to provide documentation in a timely manner. If an examination is missed because of an unexcused absence or due to tardiness that is not due to an extenuating circumstance, permission to take the exam at a later date is at the discretion of the instructor, and the highest grade that can be earned on the exam is 70 percent.

8. Tardiness and unexcused absences are considered unprofessional behavior. Repeated or especially egregious unprofessional behavior may warrant dismissal from the program.

**DRESS STANDARDS**

A professional appearance is essential while enrolled in the PTA program. The student will portray a well-groomed appearance of a health care professional. Exceptions to guidelines will only be made for religious and cultural reasons. Students not adhering to dress code will be asked by the instructor to leave the classroom, and the student will be responsible for making arrangements to make up time lost due to such an instance.

**SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR LECTURE:**

**Women:** Dress, skirt or pants with shirt and footwear appropriate to the overall appearance of the attire. Shirts must be tucked in unless clearly designed to be untucked but remain professional in appearance.

**Men:** Pants or slacks with shirt and footwear appropriate to the overall appearance of the attire. Shirts must be tucked in unless clearly designed to be untucked but remain professional in appearance.

**General:** Hair will be clean and neat. Hats and sunglasses are not acceptable in the classroom or laboratories. Upper and lower garments must be of a length and fit that are suitable to the build and stature of the student. The cut of sleeveless garments must not expose undergarments or be otherwise immodest. Strapless garments are prohibited. Straps of permitted garments must be a minimum of ½ inches in width. Upper garments must adequately cover the waistline and must not expose the midriff while the student is performing normal related activities (studying, retrieving books, raising hands, etc.). Pants should have no holes or rips. Dress and skirts lengths must reach mid-thigh or below with the waistband of skirts worn at waist level. Students must wear closed-toe shoes that are safe and appropriate for the learning and medical environment. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum, both in size and quantity. Nose or eyebrow rings are not acceptable. Visible body art (tattoos) must be covered. Special clinical attire will be discussed prior to the first clinical experience.
LABORATORY DRESS

Laboratory dress is the same for men and women. IRSC PTA program t-shirt or sweat shirt with gym shorts and athletic shoes comprise the laboratory uniform. Shorts, t-shirts and sweat shirts must allow for modesty and free movement. Women are required to wear an athletic/sports bra for lab sessions when visualization of the spine and scapula are required. Hair should be tied back so that it does not come in contact with the equipment or the "patient”. Students who are not properly outfitted in the lab uniform will not be permitted to participate in the lab session. Only stud earrings are permitted.

*PTA program uniforms and accessories are available for purchase at the IRSC bookstore, The River Shop.

HOUSEKEEPING – CLASSROOM AND LAB SAFETY REGULATIONS

Indian River State College is committed to providing a safe environment for its employees and students. The College publishes a Safety Management Manual on an annual basis. A copy of the manual is made available to the Program Director and the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education. A copy of the Safety Management Manual is also kept in the PTA Lab. A first aid kit is located in room P119.

Safety regulations regarding the use of all equipment are presented at the start of each semester. It is imperative that these standards be adhered to in order for a safe environment to be maintained in the classroom and in the lab area. In the event that a student identifies any potential hazards, (e.g., exposed electrical wires on devices located in the classroom, lab or any other area), the student must discontinue usage and notify the Program Director or any other faculty member immediately. In the absence of a faculty member, the student should request that the Health Science Division Administrative Assistant (772-462-7544) notify the IRSC Maintenance Department.

Students are limited to practicing only those skills and techniques presented in lecture and lab by faculty members. In order to demonstrate an acceptable threshold of skill on skills competency examinations, students are encouraged to practice and demonstrate skills on classmates and faculty during lab and supervised open lab time. Prior to performing any skill or technique, students must obtain verbal consent from the participant and verbalize the related indications, precautions, and contraindications to confirm the absence of contraindications and to modify the intervention as needed in order to ensure the participants’ safety. Therefore, the participant is responsible for disclosing personal medical information to the SPTA and or faculty member as warranted. Calibration and safety testing of all laboratory equipment is performed on an annual basis prior to the actual utilization of the equipment in lab.

In the event of any fire, the student should activate/pull the nearest emergency alarm located at the closest classroom or building exit. All students should leave the area immediately. Students are prohibited from working with any classroom or lab equipment until they are given an “all clear.” If any injury occurs while the student is present in the PTA lab/classroom area, the student should inform the instructor/program faculty immediately and complete the IRSC accident form. Refer to the IRSC Student Handbook/Planner.
Food and open drinks are not permitted within the lecture/laboratory classrooms.

The use of cell phones is prohibited during classroom and laboratory activities. All cell phones, ear phones and beepers must be set on silent or off during scheduled class or lab time. Using a cell phone to make or answer a call, send or read text messages, send or read emails, other than IRSC emergency messages, or take photographs is strictly prohibited. Students may review IRSC emergency messages during class time. No student has the right to disturb the teaching and learning process.

The use of audio recorders for the sole purpose of enhancing the learning process is at the discretion of the instructor. Students must request permission to use personal audio recorders prior to recording any presentation.

Refer to IRSC Student Handbook/Planner for the tobacco use regulations and Board policy. Students must adhere to campus tobacco regulations.

AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION (APTA)

Student memberships in the American Physical Therapy Association and the Florida Physical Therapy Association (FPTA) are strongly encouraged. Participation in events and meetings sponsored by the APTA and FPTA are also recommended. Faculty will advise the students on APTA and FPTA activities and will inform PTA students of scheduled events.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Students are expected to comply with all of the standards adopted by the APTA regarding the use of social media and to follow the specific guidelines for any educational institution, health care organization or other employer or clinical facility with whom they are affiliated.

Students may not use any reference to Indian River State College, its mascot, colors or other specific identifying IRSC features that could be associated with the IRSC PTA program in their discourse on any form of social media (see Appendix H).

PTA PROGRAM CLASS OFFICERS

Students are encouraged to select class officers to assist in organizing class activities and to serve as liaisons with the PTA faculty. At a minimum, a president and a liaison to the faculty should be selected and other positions, such as Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer may also be selected. The class is encouraged to become involved in APTA and FPTA events and in community service activities.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Indian River State College provides opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, for club membership in professional and honorary societies and for participation in a well-respected intercollegiate and intramural sports program. All students are encouraged to participate in campus activities. Contact the Student Activities Office, located in the Koblegard Student Union for additional information.
ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Academic standards are those measures by which, the faculty of the program, determine a student's quality of performance. They are composed of guidelines for advancement in the program as well as the regulations for grading, re-admission and dismissal.

GRADING SCALE

1. Students must achieve a minimum of "C" for the final grade in ALL COURSES (technical core curriculum, general education, and required specialized electives) that are required for completion of the degree.

The grading scale utilized by the program is:

A = 90 - 100
B = 80 - 89
C = 70 - 79
D = 60 - 69
F = 59 and BELOW

A grade of "D" or "F" may be given in any course; however, such a grade is not considered as having met the prerequisite standard for advancement to the next term of academic study nor will it permit continuation of enrollment in the program. (Refer to Student Re-admission Regulation.)

2. A student must pass all skills competencies and laboratory practical exams within a course prior to progressing to the next level of academia or performing those skills in a clinical setting. Laboratory skills competencies and practical exams are graded consistently across all courses. Course instructors determine a number of specific performance criteria for each exam and student performance on each criterion is rated as follows:

2 = performs correctly & independently
1 = performs with assistance/cues
0 = unable to perform

Criterion points are totaled to determine if the student has achieved the minimum threshold for competency (passed) on each portion of the exam as well as the total exam. Total points are calculated as a percentage of the total possible points to score the exam. The number of total possible points and the threshold for competency varies with course content. Standardized templates for both skills competencies and practical exams are available for student review prior to the exam. Students are informed of their pass/fail status immediately following the exam. Student performance on each criterion is reviewed with the student following the exam. Opportunities for retaking the exam will be provided for those who fail on the first attempt. A maximum of three attempts is permitted to achieve a passing grade.
Failure to successfully pass a skills competency or practical exam on the third (3rd) attempt will result in failure of the course.

Patient safety is an important consideration during skills competencies and lab practical exams. Placing a simulated patient at risk during a practical exam, may result in failure of the exam.

3. Clinical Practice I and II are graded on a satisfactory or unsatisfactory basis. Final determination of a student grade depends on a satisfactory performance report and other assigned requirements as outlined in the clinical course syllabi.

4. An incomplete grade (I) is given to a student, who, although passing the majority of the given course, has not completed the full class requirements. At the time that grades are submitted, the student will be given a list of work not yet completed and an explanation of how completion of the requirements will contribute to the final grade.

5. If a student withdraws from or fails a PHT course during the first semester, he/she must reapply to the program. The student’s application will be given the same consideration as all other applicants applying for the Physical Therapist Assistant program.

6. All clinical and classroom assignments are to be handed in on time. Penalties are incurred for late submission of assignments and are detailed in the course syllabi.

7. Individual course syllabi will further detail specific academic standards relative to any given course.

OPEN LAB

Open Lab is an opportunity for students to practice skills learned during lecture/lab. The lab is supervised by PTA Faculty/Adjunct Faculty. It is recommended that ALL students attend, though it is not mandatory. Hours for Open Lab will be announced at the beginning of each semester. (Students must be dressed in laboratory attire.)

REVIEW OF QUIZZES/TESTS

Tests, quizzes and special project grades will be reviewed in a timely manner. Test questions are the property of the PTA Program, and students will not be able to keep copies of the exam questions. All tests, quizzes, practical exams, and special projects will be kept in a student file in the PTA Faculty Office. Student folders are available for review during a scheduled appointment with the PTA faculty.

STUDENT RE-ADMISSION REGULATION

This regulation details the requirements and guidelines for processing an individual’s request for re-admission into the IRSC Physical Therapist Assistant program. A student will have only one opportunity for re-admission in to the program.

A. Conditions for Re-Admission
   1. The student has withdrawn from the program for one of the following reasons;
      a. Pregnancy
b. Illness, injury or disability of the student or an immediate family member as verified by physician's written statement.

c. The student received a “D” or lower in one technical course (PTA core curriculum) and/or natural science course.

d. The student received a failing grade on a skills competency exam or practical exam.

e. The student received an unsatisfactory grade in the clinical component of the program.

f. The student is unable to participate in the clinical educational component of the program because of health issues or failure to otherwise meet the qualifications for participation.

2. The student had completed at least one full semester of enrollment in the program and maintained the required academic standards of the program.

3. The student was in good standing and had met all financial obligations to the program and IRSC at the time of withdrawal.

4. Conditions necessitating the student’s withdrawal have been alleviated.

B. Re-Admission Process (The program reserves the right to require readmitted students to repeat one or more courses)

1. Student submits a formal written request for re-admission to the program on or before the NEXT PTA Health Sciences program application deadline date.

2. Program Director evaluates the request and verifies that the student satisfies the conditions for re-admission.

3. Dean of Health Science and/or Program Director informs student of the decision (approval or disapproval).

4. If the request is approved, the Program Director will:

a. Require a physician's written verification of the student’s health status.

b. Provide the student with a current copy of the Physical Therapist Assistant Student Handbook to be reviewed by the student.

c. Request a written statement of acceptance to the position verifying that the student has reviewed the Student Handbook and will abide by the regulations and guidelines of the program.

d. Schedule an orientation session with the student prior to the day of reenrollment.

e. Require any student who re-enters the Physical Therapist Assistant program to demonstrate minimal competency in laboratory skills for each course that is a prerequisite for the course of re-entry and retake required courses that have not been passed.

f. Require any student who re-enters the Physical Therapist Assistant program to complete and submit physical exam, immunizations, proof of health insurance, drug and background screenings.
PROGRAM PROBATION AND REGULATIONS

Regulation 1.0: Program Probation

If by mid-term of any semester, a student's grade average in a specific course fails to meet the academic performance level required for that semester (thresholds vary by semester), program probation will automatically be conferred on the student. A student's failure to achieve the required academic performance by mid-term in any course will confer upon that student an impending state of course failure. This state is known as program probation.

Procedure 1.0: Warning of Impending Program Probation

Instructors may use their discretion in the choice of remediation for a student who fails to achieve required academic performance in their course. Providing an opportunity to retake a written exam is at the discretion of the instructor. If the course instructor opts to provide a retake of a written exam, the highest score possible for the exam is the passing threshold for that course. Remediation may also take the form of a written assignment, mandatory help sessions, tutoring by external persons, etc. PTA faculty must use the IRSC Reach Out system to ensure additional student services are provided for those who may require a variety of academic or behavioral strategies to achieve success. PTA students must respond to Reach Out notifications to confirm their receipt. A Reach Out notification serves as a prompt to the student to schedule a meeting with the course instructor in order to determine, if possible, the factors contributing to poor academic performance. Students should consider the Reach Out notifications a warning of impending program probation.

Procedure 1.1: Program Probation Process

The Program Director will initiate program probation status upon written notification of a course instructor. Following written notification, the student will be required to meet individually with the Program Director to develop a corrective action plan. Students will be required to demonstrate significantly higher scores on the remaining evaluative criteria for that course in order to guarantee achievement of the required level of performance by the end of the term. Program probation will be lifted at the end of the term in which it was conferred if required academic performance is achieved. Failure to demonstrate progress results in course failure. If failure occurs during the first semester, the student will be given the opportunity to reapply to the program. Course remediation and readmission the following year will be at the discretion of the faculty for course failure in any subsequent semester.

Procedure 1.2: Remediation and Grading of Skills Competency Exams and Practical Exams

As in other courses, PTA faculty may use their discretion in the choice of remediation for a student who fails to achieve required skill performance in their course. Providing opportunities to retake a skills competency or practical exam is required. The grade on the retake exam(s), will be a combination of the score from the 1st attempt with a maximum of 10 percent added to the final score. The percentage added to the original score will decrease with the number of retake exams.
Procedure 1.3: Program Probation for Unprofessional Behavior

Demonstration of unprofessional behaviors, or repeated lack of professional behavior at any time during participation in the PTA program warrants initiation of a state of program probation. Following written notification, the student will be required to meet individually with the Program Director to develop a corrective behavioral action plan. Failure to complete the behavioral action plan and to demonstrate professional behavior throughout the remainder of the semester will result in a deduction in the student's final grades for the semester. This will be deemed as an unprofessional conduct penalty. The penalty will be commensurate with the extent of the unprofessional conduct and will be applied upon consensus of the entire faculty. In the case of particularly egregious behavior, immediate dismissal from the program may be warranted.

DISMISSAL REGULATION

The Physical Therapist Assistant student may be dismissed from the program at any time for any of the following reasons:

1. Breech of rules or regulations of the student’s assigned clinical education site.
2. Conviction, distribution or possession of illegal drugs or controlled substances.
3. Reporting for class or clinic under the influence of alcohol or narcotics or partaking of these substances while in clinic or classroom.
4. Malicious destruction or theft of property of a clinical education site, its visitors, guests or employees.
5. Refusal to comply with the Physical Therapist Assistant program regulations and requirements.
6. Habitual tardiness and absence. (Refer to Student Responsibilities.)
7. Academic dishonesty (Refer to the IRSC College Catalog and Health Science Division Student Handbook.)
8. Unprofessional or unethical conduct.
9. Insubordination
10. Violations of hospital, clinical or facility departmental policies, regulations and procedures appropriately documented by the Center Coordinator for Clinical Education (CCCE) or Administrative Director of Clinical Education.
PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS - 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, it is expected that the following requirements be met in a safe, ethical and legal manner under the supervision of a physical therapist.

ACADEMIC

- Graduate of an accredited Physical Therapist Assistant program achieving an Associate in 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 and safely with a patient/client.
- Demonstrate volitional and utilize movement to perform proper body mechanics of all patient/client treatment techniques and related procedures (e.g., stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, reaching and handling).
- Perform medium work as defined by Realistic Assessment of Vocational Experiences (RAVE) “exerting 20 to 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 muscle groups for determining strength, for strengthening and stretching exercises.
- Ability to resist and support a 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 (e.g., hearing monitor alarms, emergency signals, CPR, ausculatory sounds, verbal communication).
• 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 fingering 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 provider.

• 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.

Indian River State College provides reasonable accommodations to PTA students with documented disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Reasonable accommodations made in the academic setting at IRSC may not be available in all clinical sites for Clinical Practice I, II, III (PHT 1801, PHT 2810, PHT 2820). [Refer to Appendix for Release of Information to Clinical Site Form]. Contact the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Director and Student Disabilities Services following acceptance to the program and before the first day of classes in the Fall, to declare your need for reasonable accommodations.
AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT SCHOLARSHIP

The Joanne Bury Physical Therapist Assistant Scholarship is available for second year (Technical Phase) PTA students enrolled in the program. The scholarship is provided by Ms. Bury, who values the importance of the physical therapy profession through the education of physical therapist assistants. Contact the IRSC Foundation for further criteria and application deadline.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The PTA Program faculty reserves the right to recognize outstanding student achievement in academics, clinical performance, and the Leila Darress Award for outstanding perseverance in attaining both academic and clinical achievement in the face of hardship. Academic achievement will be based on grade point average in the PTA program. The faculty will accept nominations from clinical instructors for outstanding clinical performance and the faculty will elect the outstanding clinician. The Leila Darress Award is presented annually to the student elected by the class and faculty who meets the following criteria:

- A grade point average equal to or exceeding that of the top 1/3 of the graduating class
- Clinical performance equal to or exceeding that of the top 1/3 of the graduating class
- Overcoming significant hardship (financial, psychosocial, physical) during the course of training to complete PTA training

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND LICENSURE

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

1. To qualify for graduation, the PTA student must have:
   a. Earned a “C” or better in all PTA Program courses, including the General Education, specialized electives, and technical physical therapy courses and satisfied all general education requirements.
   b. A 2.0 IRSC and cumulative grade point average.
   c. Successfully completed the College requirements for the A.S. Degree as described in the IRSC College Catalog.
   d. Requested and reviewed a graduation check with a Graduation Counselor (Enrollment and Student Services), prior to or before second year spring registration.
   e. Completed the IRSC application for commencement and paid the fee.
2. Upon graduation from the College, the PTA student will be:
   a. Granted an Associate in Science Degree from Indian River State College.
   b. Eligible to apply for Florida licensure.

LICENSING EXAMINATION

The National Physical Therapist Assistant Examination serves to evaluate the minimum level of competence of the graduate. Further information can be obtained through the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (https://www.fsbpt.org/), 509 Wythe Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, Telephone: (703) 739-9420. It is mandatory for graduates of the program to become licensed if they wish to practice in the State of Florida.
APPENDIX A

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The general education and required specialized electives that are components of the Associate in Science Degree in Physical Therapist Assistant must be completed according to the program sequence or prior to acceptance into the program. Since performance on these courses are part of the admissions criteria, as many of these courses as possible should be completed prior to applying to the PTA Program. The courses synthesize with the program philosophy and purpose to reach the program goals. (Refer to Program of Study.) The courses are as follows: (Refer to course description in the current Indian River State College Catalog.)

All courses require a grade of “C” or higher. General Education and required specialized electives must be completed according to the program sequence or prior to acceptance into the program.

ENC 1101 English Composition I
HSC 2531 Medical Terminology I
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 Principles of Physics
MAT 1033 Intermediate Algebra or higher
PSY 2012 Introduction to Psychology

A 3-credit humanities course with ethical content (suggested courses are the following):
   PHI 2630 Introduction to Ethics
   PHI 1103 Critical and Creative Thinking
   PHI 1635 Ethical Issues in Health Care

The technical physical therapy courses consist of lecture and lab to enhance the educational development of the student to achieve competency skills necessary for placement in the educational clinical site. The course schedule is located online at www.irsc.edu. Click Programs and Careers, choose Physical Therapist Assistant, and select Schedule. The course descriptions are found in the Indian River State College Catalog.

The PTA program is committed to the advancement of students to attain critical thinking and problem solving skills, self-discipline, creativity and ethical values to make decisions in their personal and professional lives. The integrated curriculum plan of general educational courses of humanities, natural sciences, mathematics, social and behavioral sciences and technical physical therapy courses enhance the social, cultural and intellectual development of the student to meet the needs of the health care delivery system.
INFORMED CONSENT OF VARIOUS FORMS OF MEDIA

I, ________________________________, am willing to appear in photographs, transparencies, films, videotapes, and other forms of media, for educational and informational purposes at Indian River State College.

__________________________________________  _________________________________________
Student (Print)                              Student ID Number

__________________________________________  ________________________________
Student Signature                           Date
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APPENDIX C
Indian River State College
Physical Therapist Assistant Program

INFORMED CONSENT FOR LABORATORY, SKILLS COMPETENCY EXAMS
AND PRACTICAL EXAMS

Review and sign the following consent, then return to the Program Director for review. There are two sections, 1) pertaining to Patient-Simulation and 2) pertaining to Student PTA Stimulation during laboratory practice, Skill Competency Exams and Practical Exams. If you have any cultural or personal differences/conditions that require attention or modification to the following, seek the immediate advice of the Program Director.

Patient Simulation

I, ________________________________, agree to be treated by the PTA faculty, Clinical Supervisor, guest lecturers or classmates during any or all labs, skills competency exams and practical exams as required throughout the two-year curriculum of the PTA program. I understand that I am responsible for providing constructive verbal and non-verbal feedback to my classmates concerning draping, safety, etc. immediately following the treatment session in which they are simulating the role of PTA.

Student PTA Simulation

I, ________________________________, agree to follow the APTA Guide for Conduct of the PTA during laboratory, skills competency exams and practical exams as required throughout the two-year curriculum of the PTA program. I agree to protect the modesty and safety of all simulated patients treated.

________________________________________
Student (Print)

________________________________________
Student ID Number

________________________________________
Student’s Signature

________________________________________
Date
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APPENDIX D

Indian River State College
Physical Therapist Assistant Program

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE REFERENCE INFORMATION

I authorize the Department Program Director or instructors of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Indian River State College to release information concerning my performance while enrolled in the program.

I agree to have my education, health and background records released to professional/healthcare agencies requesting that information, and other agencies as designated by IRSC who have a legitimate interest in my student records.

I give the College permission to register me for an online Health Science Alumni course which will help to collect graduate data as well as provide pertinent career oriented information at no charge.

This information may be released to prospective employers to whom I have given the Program Director or instructors as a reference.

This information may be given out by phone, email or letter.

________________________________________________________________________________________
Student (Print)                                                                                      Student ID Number

________________________________________________________________________________________
Student Signature                                                                                 Date
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APPENDIX E

Indian River State College
Physical Therapist Assistant Program
Health Science Division

INFORMED CONSENT AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

I, ________________________________, understand that as a clinical student, I may be exposed to environmental hazards and infectious diseases including, but not limited to Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B, and HIV (AIDS) while in a clinical facility.

Neither Indian River State College nor any of the clinical facilities used for clinical practice assumes liability if a student is injured on the campus or in the clinical facility/practicum during training unless the injury is a direct result of negligence by the college or clinical facility. I understand that I am responsible for the cost of health care for any personal injury I may suffer during my education. I understand that I must purchase private health insurance while enrolled in the PTA Program.

I further understand that I shall have liability insurance (which covers malpractice) while enrolled in classes involving clinical activities. This insurance fee is automatically included each year in a lab fee.

I understand and assume responsibility for the policies, objectives, course requirements and inherent risks involved in the education of Physical Therapist Assistant students at Indian River State College.

____________________________________    ____________________________________
Student (Print)    Student ID Number

____________________________________    _________________________________
Student Signature    Date
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CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

The patient has a right to every consideration of privacy concerning his own medical care program. Case discussion, consultation, examination, and treatment are confidential and should be conducted discreetly. Those not directly involved in his care must have the permission of the patient to be present. The patient has the right to expect that all communications and records pertaining to his care should be treated as confidential.

A Patient’s Bill of Rights (1975)

I am aware that as a student of the Indian River State College Physical Therapist Assistant Program (PTA), I have access to patient information that is protected by state and federal law. I understand that state law prohibits me from making any disclosure of medical information without the specific written consent of the person to whom such information pertains, or as otherwise permitted by federal, state, or local laws. I also understand that failure to maintain appropriate confidentiality will result in my dismissal from the PTA Program.

__________________________________________  ______________________________________
Student (Print)                                      Student ID Number

__________________________________________  ______________________________________
Student Signature                                Date
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APPENDIX G

Indian River State College
Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Change in Health Status

__________________________________________________________________________    __________________________
Student’s Name                  Student ID

This above-mentioned student is presently enrolled in the Physical Therapist Assistant program at Indian River State College. The role of the Physical Therapist Assistant in the various healthcare settings requires academic, physical, mental and environmental work/demands. Due to the nature of the program, the student will be exposed to health hazards demonstrating the ability to make appropriate judgment decisions in emergency and non-emergency situations. In order to determine the appropriate precautions, we need the following information:

(1) Diagnosis ___________________________________________________________

(2) Date of Onset _______________________________________________________

(3) Present Health Status _______________________________________________

(4) Do you recommend him/her continuation in the enrolled program?
   _____Yes      _____No

(5) Recommended date Clinical Education may resume: _______________________

(6) Recommended date for continuation of didactic lectures with co-requisite laboratories:
   ___________________________________________________________________

(7) Do you recommend any limitation to regular duties? _____Yes _____No
   If yes, please explain.
_____________________________________________________________________

Physician’s Signature                         Date
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APPENDIX H
Indian River State College
Physical Therapist Assistant Program

APTA STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT IN THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA HOD P06-12-17-16 [Position]

Whereas, social media creates opportunities to communicate in a public forum;

Whereas, Physical therapists (PT), physical therapist assistants (PTA) and physical therapy students (students) must be knowledgeable and respectful of the principles of patient/client privacy and confidentiality in safeguarding identifiable patient/client information as it relates to social media;

Whereas, PTs, PTAs, and students who use social media should represent their own views and be professional and accurate in their communications;

Whereas, errors and omissions in communication, harassing statements, and unprofessional language presented via social media may have a long-lasting and possibly negative impact on the individual or the physical therapy profession;

Whereas, PTs, PTAs, and students shall consider when and how to separate their personal and professional lives on social media; and,

Whereas, PTs, PTAs, and students should be knowledgeable about employers’, educational institutions’, or clinical training sites’ published policies on social media;

Resolved, Physical therapists (PT), physical therapist assistants (PTA) and physical therapy students (students) shall consider whether to interact with patients on social media or create separate personal and professional social media profiles;

Resolved, PTs, PTAs, and students shall not misrepresent when they are speaking for themselves or the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), other organizations, educational institutions, clinical sites, or employers; and

Resolved, if an individual identifies content posted to social media by a colleague that appears unprofessional, s/he has a responsibility to bring that to the attention of the individual that has posted the content so that s/he can remove it or take other appropriate action;

Resolved, PTs, PTAs, and students engaging in social media activities shall demonstrate appropriate conduct in accordance with the Code of Ethics for the Physical Therapist and Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant.

Explanation of Referenced Numbers: BOD P00-00-00-00 stands for Board of Directors/month/year/page/vote in the Board of Directors Minutes; the “P” indicates that it is a position (see below). For example, BOD P11-97-06-18 means that this position can be found in the November 1997 Board of Directors minutes on Page 6 and that it was Vote 18.
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