



**MINUTES
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 20, 2021 ZOOM MEETING**

Date of Meeting: 9/20/21

Members Present: Kory Thomas, Mary Ellen Barkman, Maryellen Sullivan, Joseph Jackson, Lindsay Largent, Mary Hanlon, Kirsten Snellenburg, Reynaldo Candolea, Marcey Wright, Debra Fox, Cathey Garvey, Deanna Stentiford, Norman Schlact, Marlon Alaan, Teresa Chiavacci, and Alex Kerekes

Members Excused: Don Keller, Sue Barber

Others Present: N/A

Call to Order: The members introduced themselves. Teresa Chiavacci called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Unfinished Business: It was announced that Mary Hanlon, full-time faculty of 30 years, retired in July.

Program Updates:

Kory Thomas mentioned that Debra Fox has accepted the role of Acting full-time faculty for the Basic Patient Care lecture and lab. Debra Fox mentioned she is learning how to keep the lecture material consistent with the learning objectives for each course. Marcey Wright is serving as a Lab Facilitator in Therapeutic Exercise Lab this semester. Marcey Wright mentioned she is taking a rehab coordinator position with St. Petersburg General Hospital, a direct source for many clinical rotations.

Kory Thomas stated that students in the past cohort achieved an 88% pass rate on the first attempt on the NPTE. Some students have chosen to postpone taking the NPTE exam until a later date. Graduation rates have increased to 82.35% for 2021 compared to 80.9% in the previous year. The employment rate from the 2020 graduating cohort is 96%.

Mary Ellen Barkman stated that achievement gaps in the public school have existed as a result of COVID-19 lockdowns. She asked if there are any ways to measure if the gaps exist at a collegiate level. Kory Thomas stated that she receives a detailed NPTE report from the testing organization that illustrates the performance of the program in each content area. Overall, she has noticed some areas of study have dipped in score; however, no significant pattern is recognized at this time. She plans to continue to analyze the data to determine if COVID-19 had an impact on student learning and exam outcomes.

Joe Jackson mentioned, as a whole, he felt the courses were more engaging in-person than virtual as distractions could be mitigated.

Clinical Education

Lindsay Largent stated that for the PHT2810L course, she has acquired 29 slots but has not paired the students to their respective sites. For PHT2820L, Lindsay Largent stated that she has 36 sites for students. For the PHT1801L course, there is also an adequate number of slots to accommodate the freshmen students. There will be a discussion of how to proceed with clinical rotations secondary to COVID-19.

This will be handled as necessary according to a case by case basis. Some students may need to obtain a vaccine while others will be able to utilize a mask when working with patients. There was also discussion regarding the inclusion of COVID-19 treatments into the curriculum. This could include the integration of aseptic techniques, breathing exercises, and specific respiratory treatments. Lindsay Largent stated there has not been a formal addition to curriculum regarding COVID-19 treatments; however, she has discussed techniques in class. Marcey Wright stated SPGH has its own center and protocol for COVID-19 treatments that PTAs can utilize.

Kory Thomas presented the table of skills students have learned from our CI Clinical Handbook, asking for input as to what the CIs feel needs to be added. Teresa Chiavacci mentioned the paraffin bath modality is not utilized much by PT departments; it is utilized more by OT departments. SPC has been approved to purchase a Laser to instruct students in it as a modality. Mary Ellen Barkman mentioned fluidotherapy is utilized sometimes for RSD patients, but only with the feet or hands. The members explained the Hoyer/mechanical lift would be good for students to learn prior to clinical rotations. Mechanical traction was also suggested to add, along with Laser treatments. It was also recommended that students be familiar with diathermy as a modality of treatment since this modality is utilized in skilled nursing facilities.

Kory Thomas stated that in the clinic, the students should not be expected to be evaluated on skills they have not been taught or passed in the laboratory setting. Mary Ellen Barkman recommended that outcome measures be taught to the students so PTAs can understand these functional reports. Kirsten Snellenburg stated she does cover these functional tests in the Trends class.

Rey Candolea mentioned the SOAP notes are not utilized in his facility, but rather the notes are based more on assessment. This was in response to the discussion about SOAP note formats among members and how students are expected to understand how to write a SOAP note. Mary Ellen Barkman asked if SPC has an EMR that students are able to use. Kory Thomas responded that Web PT is utilized by the program but students are not tested on its utilization. Mary Ellen Barkman stated that she thinks student would benefit from practicing with EMR so they do not feel overwhelmed in clinical practice.

Kory Thomas asked the committee to send an email to her regarding any trends or current items of interest that would be helpful to the students or program to implement. An Advisory Committee Feedback Survey has been sent to the members so as they can make recommendations and provide feedback about the PTA Program.

Student Update: Students in the freshmen and sophomore class who have scored low in class on tests will be monitored. They will be advised to obtain resources outside of class such as NIP, tutoring with Alex Kerekes, or speaking with the Accessibility Services Coordinator.

New Business:

Kory Thomas announced that the former vacant staff assistant position has been filled by Ms. Michelle Farren. PT Month is approaching in October and the students will develop an interactive activity, while following CDC Covid-19 guidelines, to promote the PT profession.

Industry Updates & Discussion:

Alex Kerekes mentioned the ramifications of the PTA reimbursement cut in January 2022. This will continue to be monitored as to how it impacts the field and education of physical therapy. Mary Ellen

Barkman suggested having the students from PT and PTA programs develop a way to voice concerns in the field to CMS and the Congressional level.

Adjournment: Adjourned at 8:38 pm.

Secretary