PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM

APPLICATION INFORMATION PACKET

Revised August 2017

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GCC College Catalog and Student Handbook

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ABBREVIATIONS

CAPTE: Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
The organization responsible for the accreditation oversight of PT and PTA programs in the U.S.

ACCE: Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education
The full-time GCC faculty member responsible for clinical placements and student assessment in clinical experiences, as well as other teaching duties.

FSBPT: Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy
The organization which administers the licensing exam, required to practice as a PTA.

LIST OF ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS NOT INCLUDED IN THIS PACKET:

Advising Worksheet and FAQs
Volunteer Rating Form
Introductory Letter for Clinical Observation/Volunteer Experiences
Application Instructions
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM INFORMATION

Accreditation Status of the PTA Program

Graduation from a physical therapist assistant education program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education is necessary for eligibility to sit for the licensure examination, which is required in all states.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Germanna Community College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: http://www.capteonline.org.

A link to confirmation of the accreditation status is available on the website by clicking on the CAPTE logo.

General Information

Currency of Information: Please see the current GCC College Catalog and refer to the PTA Program website to ensure up-to-date information, as information in this packet is subject to change.

Admission to the PTA program is competitive; class size is limited and not all qualified applicants can be accepted. A standardized system is in place which will include a point designation for criteria presented in detail in the section “Selection Process” on page 8 of this document, and presented in checklist form on the PTA Advising Worksheet document, available on our website.

All classes and clinical experiences are conducted during the fall and spring semesters at the Locust Grove Campus. A new cohort is accepted every fall semester. There are four semesters in the technical portion of the program. Academic calendars for upcoming semesters are available at http://www.germanna.edu/academic-calendar/. Students should expect to devote 40 hours a week to the PTA program when in session. Successful graduates receive the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Physical Therapist Assistant from Germanna Community College (GCC).

Applications are submitted electronically by the posted application deadline, around May 15 of each year. The top 20 applicants are invited for the interview process, and the program accepts 12 students annually.

Mission of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program

The mission of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Germanna Community College is to prepare successful graduates of a comprehensive and contemporary program of study who have the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of entry-level physical therapist assistants, and who are able to meet the employment needs of the surrounding communities.
THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT CAREER

The Profession of Physical Therapy

Physical Therapy is a profession primarily concerned with the treatment and management of impairments and disabilities and the promotion of mobility, functional ability, quality of life and movement potential through therapeutic exercise, functional training, and a variety of modalities.

The Role of the Physical Therapist Assistant

Physical Therapist Assistants (PTAs) provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of the Physical Therapist (PT). The Physical Therapist evaluates the patient and determines an individualized plan of care for each patient, designed to promote the ability to move, reduce pain, restore function, and prevent disability. The PTA then carries out the plan of care under the supervision of the PT, who is responsible for the services provided by the PTA. PTAs work closely with Physical Therapists and other members of the health care team to ensure patient success in achieving optimal functional ability.

PTAs work with people of all ages, from birth to old age, and in a variety of settings, including outpatient clinics, hospitals, inpatient rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, home health agencies, private practice, school systems, and sports programs. PTAs address mobility deficits with interventions such as teaching therapeutic exercises, applying therapeutic modalities, performing manual stretching or soft tissue mobilization, teaching a patient to walk using an assistive device, teaching a family member to assist a patient, improving body mechanics for safety in the workplace, or instructing parents how to manage mobility issues in children.

Job Market for Physical Therapist Assistants


“There are several driving factors in this faster-than-average job growth. Rising populations of both aging baby boomers and those with chronic health issues, such as diabetes and obesity, are expected to increasingly require the services of physical therapist assistants. Medical and technological advances, which help save the lives of trauma victims or newborns with birth defects, are also creating more work for these professionals, since PTAs are increasingly needed to provide therapeutic services to these individuals.” U.S. News and World Report http://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/physical-therapist-assistant

In addition, the population growth in the area served by Germanna Community College is predicted to be 26% for each of the next three decades (Virginia Labor Market Information), supporting the growing need for qualified health care personnel in this area.
EXPECTATIONS OF THE PTA STUDENT AT GCC

In addition to academic standards, certain behavioral expectations exist for the successful PTA Program candidate, outlined below. Applicants should review these expectations carefully, and discuss any concerns with the PTA faculty advisors.

- The decision to work in a health care profession should be based on an understanding of various health care settings. The candidate should be willing to provide care to patients who are critically or terminally ill, or severely injured or disabled.

- The candidate should feel comfortable providing treatment to all individuals without prejudice, regardless of gender, age, race, cultural background, religious affiliation, socio-economic status, or personal lifestyle choices or conditions.

- The candidate should have a basic understanding of and agree with the philosophy and practice of physical therapy and the role of the physical therapist assistant.

- Practicing health care professionals must demonstrate personal responsibility for their actions, and should be willing to accept constructive criticism both in the classroom and the clinical environment.

- Significant physical demands are placed on the physical therapist assistant student and practicing PTA, including lifting, bending, reaching and manipulating equipment. These requirements and other abilities are outlined in the document “Essential Functions of the Physical Therapist Assistant Student,” included on page 14 of this packet. The candidate will be asked to acknowledge understanding of these standards of physical and cognitive performance as part of the application.

- The candidate must be willing to abide by guidelines governing the use of social media relative to his/her experiences in the PTA Program.

- The candidate will be prepared to comply with the policies of the College and the PTA Program.

- The candidate will be prepared to abide by dress code, appearance, personal behavior, and hygiene guidelines befitting a member of the health care professions.

Criminal Background Check/Drug Screening

A criminal/sex offender background check is required as part of the admission process, as many clinical sites may deny a student with a criminal record access to its clinical units. The cost of the background check is the responsibility of the student. Instructions for ordering the required background checks and drug screen through CastleBranch.com are available on the PTA program website at http://www.germanna.edu/physical-therapist-assistant/certified-background-check.asp. The background check and drug screen must be completed within 6 months of the date of application. Any student who does not pass the background check or drug screen must resolve this issue directly with the agency that conducted the search. Unresolved issues presented in the criminal background checks or drug screens will result in dismissal from the program. Students will be screened for felony convictions (including barrier crimes outlined in the Code of Virginia) and misdemeanor drug and alcohol convictions. An exception is made for a single alcohol-related misdemeanor conviction more than five years ago. Applicants who have been convicted of a barrier crime will have considerable difficulty fulfilling the clinical placements required during the program and obtaining professional licensure in a health care field. Applicants who present with a criminal record may not be offered admission to the PTA program.
ACADEMIC PREREQUISITES AND REQUIREMENTS

Basic Academic Requirements

The following chart presents academic competency requirements that may impact a student’s ability to enroll in the program prerequisites discussed below. **Students are responsible for ensuring that all four of these competencies are met.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Math Competency</th>
<th>Students must demonstrate competency at the MTE 1-5 level as a pre-admission qualification. This may be demonstrated in any of the following ways:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• proof of college coursework equivalency of MTH 150 or above within 5 years; if older than 5 years, must pass MTE 1-5 placement testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Math Placement Testing competency of at least MTE 1-5 (within 3 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Completion of MTE 1-5 developmental math, as needed (within 3 years)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| English Competency (Placement Test) | Students must demonstrate ENG 111 placement, or are required to complete Developmental English courses. ENG 111 eligibility is also a prerequisite for many of the PTA Program required courses. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science Qualifications</th>
<th>In order to register for BIO 141, students must demonstrate competency in one of the following ways:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 2 units of high school sciences: biology, human anatomy, chemistry or physics (grade C or better) within 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• BIO 101 or equivalent college-level course within 5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer Competency</th>
<th>Students must demonstrate computer competency in one of the following ways:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Passing the IC-3 Computer Competency Exam (score &gt;/= 700) <em>see additional comments on page 6</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Completion with a passing grade of ITE 115 or an equivalent college-level course within 5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Courses Required Prior to Application**

These five (5) prerequisite courses must be completed prior to or during the semester in which the student applies to the PTA program.

- BIO 141* Anatomy and Physiology I (*NAS 161 may be substituted for BIO 141)
- ENG 111 College Composition I (or advanced standing as noted on p. 8)
- PSY 230 Developmental Psychology
- SDV 100 or 101 College Success Skills or Orientation to Healthcare (or advanced standing)
- HUM Elective ART, ENG LIT, HUM, MUS, PHI, REL, or Foreign Language course

**Co-requisite Courses:** **Recommended** Prior to Application: **Required** for Graduation

These courses may be completed prior to or during the technical portion of the program

- BIO 142* Anatomy and Physiology II (*or NAS 162)
- SOC 200 Principles of Sociology
- HLT 105 AHA Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification course (will be taken in the first semester of the PTA program)
STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS FOR APPLYING TO THE PTA PROGRAM

As early as possible:

1. **Apply for admission** to Germanna Community College.

2. Have official High School and College Transcripts mailed to Germanna Community College Admissions and Records. **Complete the Transfer Evaluation Request Form** if any required courses were taken at colleges other than Germanna. This includes other VCCS colleges. Assure that transcripts from all other colleges attended are on file with the GCC Admissions and Records office prior to the program application deadline date. See Welcome Center staff for assistance.

3. Attend a **Physical Therapist Assistant Information Session** (dates are announced on the PTA Program website).

4. Test out of **MTE 1-5** or take the needed courses to fulfill this basic academic requirement.

5. Pass the **IC-3 computer competency** test with a score of 700 or better, or take **ITE 115** prior to applying to the program, to fulfill this basic academic requirement. Please note that the IC-3 is a difficult test to pass, and only one attempt is allowed. Also, there are restrictions on when the test is available in the Testing Center, and there are blackout dates in April and May. **If you are hoping to meet the computer competency requirement with the IC-3, please plan ahead.** We recommend attempting the test in the fall semester prior to application, so that you have the opportunity to take ITE 115 if you are not successful. Applicants are referred to information on the Testing Center website for details, including essential study materials: [http://www.germanna.edu/testing/ic3-computer-competency/](http://www.germanna.edu/testing/ic3-computer-competency/).

6. Complete the **prerequisite** general education courses (SDV 100/101, ENG 111, BIO 141/NAS 161, PSY 230, and the Humanities elective) with a grade of “C” or better, or show advanced standing proficiency for SDV 100, ENG 111 per college guidelines. These courses must be completed prior to or during the semester of application. Application priority points are earned for A’s and B’s in selected courses. Students are encouraged to take the remaining general education courses required for graduation (BIO 142/NAS 162, and SOC 200) prior to beginning the PTA program if at all possible. See Advising Worksheet for courses which contribute to priority points.

7. Achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better for all prerequisites and/or required general education courses.

8. Complete a criminal background check and drug screen through CastleBranch.com. Use code GD28bgdt. **This must be done within 6 months of application.** Students are advised to complete this prior to attempting to schedule volunteer/observation hours (see #10), as it may be required in the inpatient environment. A positive background check may prevent admission into the program; a record of a barrier crime will in most instances prevent admission to the program as this record may prevent required clinical affiliation placements. Completing this step early is recommended, as background checks may take up to four weeks.

9. Complete 20 documented volunteer/observation hours in each of two different clinical settings (total of 40 hours) under the direct supervision of a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant, **within two years of application.** The supervisor rating form must be
received by the PTA Program by the application deadline. Previous work experience as a
Physical Therapy Aide may count as one experience, the other experience must be in a
different clinical setting. One setting must be a hospital or long-term inpatient care setting.

10. Meet with the PTA Program Director or ACCE for completion of the Faculty Advising
Review Checklist **within the 6 months prior** to the application deadline, and **no later than
two weeks prior** to the application deadline. Given a deadline of May 15, Final Advising
must be done between November 15 and May 1. **You do not need to wait until all
application components are completed to have a Final Advising meeting.**

11. Electronically submit all components of the PTA Program Application.

12. Successfully complete (70% or higher) the interview in Phase II of the application process, if
invited. The top twenty applicants are invited to the interview phase, and applicants are
expected to present themselves professionally and to answer questions clearly.

13. Submit an updated transcript to Admissions and Records to show completion of any required
general education courses taken outside the VCCS during the semester of application.

**NOTE:** It is recommended that General Education requirements be completed within **five years**
prior to application to the program. It is **mandatory** that Math, Science and ITE
courses/competencies be completed within the **five years** prior to admission, unless waived by the
Program Director.

**It is the student’s responsibility to ensure all application materials are submitted by the
deadline.** Deadline dates are subject to change, and students are advised to visit the PTA program
website regularly for any updates. Upon completion of any additional courses at non-VCCS
institutions, an updated transcript must be sent to the Admissions and Records Office as soon as it
is available.

**SELECTIVE ADMISSIONS PROCESS**

Students are selected for the PTA program on a competitive basis, with twelve (12) students
accepted annually. The selection process in Phase I is blinded, and, application materials are
evaluated without applicants’ names. The interview in Phase II is conducted by a three-person
panel consisting of two full-time PTA faculty and a member of the GCC Diversity and Inclusion
Council. The scoring criteria to be applied during application review are defined below.
Applications will be accepted during the one month period preceding the deadline. It is advisable
to submit the application as early in the application window as possible.

Applications were reviewed for completeness by the Program Director and ACCE, who make up
the core faculty for the program. Applicants are ranked using the priority points described above,
by the Admissions and Records department. The top twenty (20) applicants are notified via mail
and phone of their invitation to the second phase of the application process, the face-to-face
interview. Once the pool of 20 finalists is identified, the remaining applicants are informed that
they are not under consideration for the PTA Program. In the event of a tie in either Phase I or
Phase II, the final slot is given to the applicant who has the highest average observation evaluation score.

**Phase I Evaluation**

The table below presents the five categories for which students may earn the points for Phase I of the application process. Each is explained in detail in the following narrative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Points for selected preparatory coursework (BIO 141, PSY 230, ENG 111)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer/observation experience evaluations</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal statement</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency in GCC service region</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>145</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Academic Achievement Points**

Priority points are earned for As and Bs in the following three courses, with a total of 145 possible points. See the Advising Checklist and Worksheet for additional details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>A (32 points)</th>
<th>B (24 points)</th>
<th>A (12 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIO 141 &amp; 142 or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAS 161 &amp; 162</td>
<td>A = 32 points</td>
<td>B = 24 points</td>
<td>A = 12 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 230</td>
<td>A = 24 points</td>
<td>B = 18 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG 111*</td>
<td>A = 12 points</td>
<td>B = 9 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A student who has completed a bachelor degree may substitute advanced placement (AP) exam scores for college composition, if a transferrable course was not taken. A score of 3 on the AP English exam will earn 9 points, a score of 4 or 5 will earn 12 points. Students will also be expected to be proficient in APA Style.*

**Volunteer/Observation Hours – rated by PT/PTA supervisors**

Applicants are evaluated by a supervising PT or PTA in the facilities in which they complete observation or volunteer hours, using a standardized instrument, the Volunteer Rating Form. These are returned to Germanna by the supervising clinician, following instructions on the form and scores are recorded. Points are earned in the following areas, and the two ratings are averaged. The supervising clinician may not be the same for both experiences.

- Listening Skills = 5 points
- Verbalization = 5 points
- Interest = 5 points
- Behavior = 5 points
- Professionalism = 5 points

Students are advised to arrive on time, dressed appropriately for a healthcare setting. Students should also make notes about the experience, which will be useful for the Personal Statement and for the Interview Phase of the application process. Observation or volunteer hours in some inpatient facilities may require documentation of immunizations and TB test. See page 12 for program immunization requirements.
Personal Statement  (Total possible Points = 12)
Essays are graded by the core faculty of the PTA program after they have been assigned applicant numbers by Admissions and Records staff. These scores are averaged and recorded by Admissions and Records. Applicants are directed to the Personal Statement Essay Instructions on page 13. Essays are graded according to the following rubric:

Content/Specificity = 3 points
Organization/Development = 3 points
Following essay instructions = 3 points
Mechanics, Vocabulary, Language Use = 3 points

Priority points for residence in the GCC service area
Place of residence is also considered in the priority process. Applicants residing in Germanna Community College’s service region (City of Fredericksburg and the counties of Caroline, Culpeper, King George, Madison, Orange, Spotsylvania and Stafford) will be awarded 30 priority points in the application process. Students who reside in the Commonwealth of Virginia outside of the GCC service area are considered for admission utilizing the same priority point system, but earn no residency points. Students who do not reside in Virginia are only considered if the number of applicants falls short of the number of available placements in the program. The residency decision is made using the student’s address of record in SIS at the end of the application window (May 15).

*NOTE FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS:  Students transferring from another college or university need to consult a transfer counselor in the Admissions and Records Office for an evaluation of transfer credit. Official transfer credit evaluations are completed when both official transcripts and a Transcript Evaluation Request Form are received by Admissions and Records. Students should submit outside transcripts by April 1 of the year of application, to ensure timely recording of required credits, and as soon as possible for courses taken during the semester of application. An earned Bachelor’s degree in any field of study waives the SDV requirement, per college advanced standing policy. Coursework transferred to GCC must represent collegiate coursework applicable to the student’s curriculum, with course content and level of instruction at least equivalent to those of students enrolled in Germanna’s curricula. Coursework from regionally accredited institutions typically meets the above criteria. No credit is given for courses with grades lower than “C.” Any VCCS course in which a student received a grade of “C” or better will transfer as the same course at any other college in the VCCS, however a Transcript Evaluation Request Form must be provided. GPAs from prior institutions will not be transferred. A GPA of 2.5 in courses taken at Germanna Community College is required. If a student has not taken any courses at GCC, the Admissions Committee reviews the GPA from other institutions to determine if the student meets the GPA requirement.

NOTE ABOUT CPR/HLT 105:  American Heart Association Healthcare Provider CPR certification is acceptable in lieu of HLT 105 (CPR) for application to the program. However, completing HLT 105 will contribute to the GPA requirement noted above. For further information on the Advanced Standing substitution, please contact the Advanced Standing Counselor or contact Tracey Williams, PTA Program faculty member.
PERSONAL STATEMENT ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS

As part of the application, you will submit a Personal Statement, worth twelve (12) points toward your total priority points. **Read the following instructions carefully.**

- Do not refer to yourself by name in the personal statement, and avoid clearly identifying statements as much as possible.
- Clearly explain why you want to be a physical therapist assistant, and describe characteristics you possess that will enable you to be a successful, caring health care professional.
- Discuss your experiences in the physical therapy environment, including your **volunteer experiences.** You may use examples of work done with patients or family members, but do not refer to patients, clients, therapists or agencies by name.
- Limit your personal statement essay to **300-600 words.**
- Your essay will be cut-and-pasted into a text box in the application form. You will be asked to acknowledge that the essay is your own work.

The essay will be evaluated on the four following components.

- ✓ Content/Specificity
- ✓ Organization/Development
- ✓ Following above instructions
- ✓ Mechanics, Vocabulary, Language Use

Each component earns up to 3 points, using the following rubric. At least two PTA Program faculty members independently grades each essay in a blind process, and the scores are averaged for the final score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.0-0.4</td>
<td>Very poor</td>
<td>Required information not present; poor grammar, spelling, and punctuation; ideas not presented in a logical manner; poor vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5-0.9</td>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>Some required information not present; frequent grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors; lack of clarity or development of ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0-1.9</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Required information present and generally clearly stated, using vocabulary at a college freshman level; some grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0-2.4</td>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>Required information present and well-organized; minimal formatting or grammatical errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5-3.0</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Exemplary essay with consistently good use of vocabulary and writing mechanics; all information present and clearly organized.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PHASE II OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS: THE INTERVIEW

Interviews of the twenty (20) top-rated applicants are conducted approximately three to six weeks after the application deadline. Each of the twenty finalists are interviewed by a panel consisting of the core faculty members and a member of the GCC Diversity and Inclusion Council, using standardized questions and a rubric. The questions are made available to applicants at the time of the interview, and interviewees are given a few minutes to review the questions and make notes. Applicants are permitted to bring notes to the interview session. Applicants are rated on their ability to formulate and clearly communicate specific and concise answers to the interview questions, and on their enthusiasm for and insight into the profession of physical therapy. General appearance expectations for the interview are communicated in the letter of invitation to interview. In addition, the GCC Career and Transfer Center is available for assistance, and a specific PTA interview preparation workshop is available for interested applicants. Further information will be provided at the time of application.

Final ranking considers both the average interview score and points earned in Phase I (except service area points), and the twelve students with the highest total scores are selected for admission. A minimum average interview score of 70% must be earned to qualify for admission. Remaining interviewees are placed on an alternate list, in descending order of ranking.

Students selected for admission to the program are notified via phone and mail within seven days of the last scheduled interview, and will be provided a Letter of Intent to sign and return by a specified date. In the event an accepted student does not return the Letter of Intent to enroll, alternates are notified in the same manner until a full cohort of 12 students has been identified. Any remaining students are notified of non-admission; however, the alternate list is maintained in case of any last minute withdrawals or changes to application standing.

If a student’s overall GPA falls below the required 2.5 as a result of courses taken during the semester of application, the student will lose his/her ranking and will be removed from the qualified list until the student’s overall GPA returns to 2.5 or better and he/she rectifies any unacceptable grades, at which time he/she may be reinstated to the list of qualified students.

Applications do not carry over from year to year. Unsuccessful applicants may resubmit a new application the next cycle. The process for re-applying is the same as the initial process. Volunteer/observation hours performed for the initial application are accepted, as long as the experience occurred within two years of the application date, or with prior approval of the Program Director.
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

Mandatory Program Orientation

PTA Program Orientation will be held prior to the start of classes, in early August. The dates are announced to students in the letter informing them of their acceptance to the PTA program. Students should expect to spend all of the assigned orientation days on campus. Information regarding the following will be provided during program orientation:

1. Ongoing CPR Certification
2. Drug Screen/Background Checks
3. Medical Examination form
4. Immunization form (required immunizations: TDAP, Varicella, MMR, Hepatitis B series, Influenza)
5. TB Test
6. Liability Insurance
7. Health/Medical Insurance
8. ID/Name Badge
9. Uniforms/Program Patch
10. Supplies

Important information about immunizations: Students who are accepted to the program must begin their Hepatitis B series by August 31 in order to finish it before the first clinical. Other immunizations may require separate appointments for each, so plan accordingly.

Once accepted, students must maintain a current CPR Certification, have a documented medical exam, and complete an annual drug screen/background check. If any of these requirements are not met, the student will not be able to proceed in the program. In addition, students must have personal medical insurance and professional liability insurance valid throughout the program. Students are responsible for these fees.

The PTA program requires a substantial commitment of time and effort. The Technical Phase of the GCC PTA program consists of four semesters of demanding pre-determined coursework, as well as clinical affiliations with specific attendance requirements. Classes for the PTA program are conducted at the GCC Locust Grove Campus during fall and spring semesters. Students must be prepared for approximately 40 hours a week of course/lab, clinic, and individual and group study time. Regardless of the class schedules as published in SIS, students are expected to be available Monday-Friday during each semester, to cover open lab requirements and additional obligations. Students must complete all PTA coursework with a “C” or better. The student must also maintain an overall 2.5 GPA.

Three full-time clinical education experiences are part of the curriculum. Additional travel time may be required. The ACCE will attempt to place students in clinical affiliations as close to their homes as possible, but students may be required to travel up to 1.5 hours to and from a clinic location if necessary. Transportation and cost involved is solely the responsibility of the student.
All PTA students must complete their clinical education experiences (clinicals). If a student fails a clinical, s/he must repeat that clinical prior to progressing to the next semester of the program. This may result in a delay of one year, due to the prescribed progression of the curriculum. If a student fails the terminal clinical, s/he must repeat that course successfully prior to graduation. Failure of more than one clinical experience will result in dismissal from the program.

An annual criminal background check and drug screen will be required, as mandated in clinical affiliation agreements. A clinical facility may deny any student who has a positive drug screen access to its clinical units. The cost will be the responsibility of the student. It is also the student’s responsibility to keep all requirements current during the program. Failure to do so may result in inability to perform the required clinical portions of the program and could result in a failing grade for the clinical affiliation and dismissal from the program.

In addition, a student may be required to undergo additional alcohol or drug screening, at the student’s expense, if there is suspicion of substance use during classes or clinical experiences. Applicants to the PTA Program should be prepared to behave according to GCC and program policy.

It is the student’s responsibility to comply with all program requirements once admitted to the program. These documents will be kept in the Document Manager section of CastleBranch, which will be purchased once the student has been accepted into the PTA program.

Once academic and clinical requirements are completed, the student may apply to take the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) for PTAs in the state in which he/she chooses to practice. The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy administers the licensing exam.
COST OF THE PROGRAM

The PTA program may require monetary expenditures in addition to the typical college and textbook fees. Students are wholly responsible for all fees related to the PTA program.

At the academic year 2017-18 cost-per-credit hour ($156.00), the cost of the technical portion of the PTA program totals $6,864.00. This does not include prerequisites, which will vary by student, but may be an additional $3,900.00, or more if preparatory courses are required. It is estimated that students will spend approximately $1,300 on the following program requirements:

- Textbooks
- Supplies
- Uniforms and name badges
- Medical and professional liability insurance
- Immunizations and medical checkups
- Fees for background checks and drug screens
- CPR, HIPAA and OSHA certification

Students may also incur costs related to clinical education, in the form of travel, parking, and possible dress code requirements, but these will vary considerably by student. Currently, the PTA licensing exam, administered by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT), is $400.00 plus processing and testing fees, and the application for licensure with the Virginia Board of Physical Therapy is $100.00. Applicants are referred to https://www.fsbpt.org/ and https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/PhysicalTherapy/ for up-to-date information.

Current information for college tuition and fees is available at http://www.germanna.edu/business-office/tuition-and-fees/.

FINANCIAL AID

The PTA program at GCC qualifies for Federal financial aid. Students should complete the FAFSA by the priority filing date of May 1 of the year in which they apply to the program, even though they will not yet know if they have been accepted. Filing after this date may impact the timing of availability of funds, and it may affect the amount of the financial aid. Students are referred to http://www.germanna.edu/financial-aid/ or to the Welcome Center at the Fredericksburg or Locust Grove campus for additional information. The FAFSA Worksheet is available at http://www.germanna.edu/financial-aid/financial-aid-forms/.

There are currently no specific scholarships devoted to students of the PTA program; however, GCC has general scholarships that may apply. Please see http://www.germanna.edu/paying-for-college/oasis-scholarship-application/ for internal scholarship opportunities. Additional opportunities may arise for PTA students, and faculty will share those as they become available.
PTA PROGRAM CURRICULUM
Please note that this curriculum is not to be used to determine courses needed in order to apply to the program. Refer to the information on pages 5-6 of this document, and the Advising Worksheet, for those requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Class Hrs/wk</th>
<th>Lab Hrs/wk</th>
<th>Clinical Educ.</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
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<td>SDV 101 Orientation to Health Care Careers (or SDV 100 College Success Skills)</td>
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<td>BIO 141 Anatomy and Physiology I (or NAS 161 Health Science I)</td>
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<td>ENG 111 College Composition I</td>
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<td>PSY 230 Developmental Psychology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Humanities Elective (ART, ENG LIT, HUM, MUS, PHI, REL, or Foreign Language)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total 12 credits</td>
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<td>Semester Totals</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>14 cr hr</td>
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<td>Semester Two</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PTH 105 Intro to Physical Therapist Assisting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PTH 121 Therapeutic Procedures I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PTH 151 Musculoskeletal Structure and Function</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>13 cr hr</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PTH 110 Medical Reporting</td>
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<td>PTH 131 Clinical Education I (Total: 140 hours)</td>
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<td>140 hrs 2 wks</td>
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<td>225 hrs 2 wks</td>
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<td>PTH 226 Therapeutic Exercise</td>
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<td>PTH 255 Seminar in Physical Therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PTH 252 Clinical Practicum II (Total 240 hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total 13 credits</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>240 hrs 2 wks</td>
<td>13 cr hr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester Totals</td>
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<td>240 hrs 2 wks</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>605 hrs 66 cr hr</td>
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ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT STUDENT

In the course of the PTA curriculum, students are required to demonstrate certain physical, behavioral and cognitive functions related to those expected in physical therapy practice, as well as specific factors related to the classroom experience. Germanna Community College has adopted the following standards that students of the program are expected to possess. Qualified individuals with a disability who can perform these essential functions with reasonable accommodations will not be denied admission to the program; however, they must contact a college disabilities counselor to determine what reasonable accommodations are appropriate to this setting. Provisions for accommodations will be made in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

PTA Student Expectations

- attend class up to 25 hours per week, and be available for 40 hours per week during clinical assignments
- tolerate extended sitting and/or standing in classroom and lab environment
- give and receive treatment interventions including but not limited to modalities, therapeutic exercise, massage, and manual therapies
- wear lab attire that may involve exposure of areas of the body
- use critical thinking and sound decision-making
- exhibit professional behaviors including, but not limited to, critical thinking, sound judgment, confidentiality, courtesy, and respect
- present a professionally-attired appearance for the clinical setting free from visible tattoos, non-traditional piercings, or unnatural hair color
- meet program standards for successful course completion, including regular attendance, timely submission of work, and compliance with academic honesty guidelines
- reflect thoughtfully on personal strengths and weaknesses as opportunity for growth

Physical Strength, Endurance and Dexterity:

- perform physical activities such as standing, walking, sitting, bending, squatting, kneeling, crawling, reaching, pushing and pulling
- lift 25-50 pounds occasionally, and/or 10-25 pounds frequently, and/or up to 10 pounds constantly (from the Dept. of Labor definition of Medium Work)
- demonstrate ability to administer CPR
- use hands for grasping, pushing, pulling, and fine manipulation
- coordination sufficient to manipulate equipment controls, to perform manual treatment/assessment techniques and to respond to patient safety needs

Sensation

- tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment and discrimination of temperature
- visual acuity sufficient for reading medical records, instrument panels, and for monitoring patients for response to treatment and making visual observations of function
- hearing sufficient to hear soft voices, equipment timers and warning sounds, to assess patient sounds including breathing, and to hear and respond to emergency situations
- sense of smell sufficient to maintain a safe environment and to respond to emergencies

Communication

- ability to use spoken and written English, including appropriate interpretation and expression of information
- ability to communicate clearly with patients and members of the health care team encompassing a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual factors

Students will be asked to acknowledge these during the advising process and once accepted to the program.