

## Northeastern University DPT Program Essential Functions

The Doctoral Program in Physical Therapy (DPT) at Northeastern University is a challenging and intense program, which places specific demands on a student enrolled in the program. The academic rigor of the program closely corresponds to intellectual and physical demands that a graduate will encounter as a practicing physical therapist.

Northeastern's DPT program is designed to prepare students to enter the physical therapy profession as a generalist with the skills, knowledge, and ability to successfully perform all the required functions of an entry-level physical therapist.

Essential functions are the aptitudes and abilities required of physical therapist students to successfully complete the curriculum of the DPT program, and to perform the clinical skills of a physical therapist consistent with Patient/Client Management as detailed in the Guide to Physical Therapy Practice.

The purpose of this document is to delineate the essential functions that are fundamental to the DPT program. Upon admission, students must be able to perform each of the essential functions outlined below during classroom, laboratory, and experiential education learning activities [including but not limited to: participation in one-on-one interactions, small group discussion and presentation, large group lectures, service learning, and patient encounters] in both academic, community, and clinical settings.

Students are also required to demonstrate good judgment, responsibility, integrity, sensitivity, and compassion, while simultaneously being able to accurately synthesize and apply knowledge in a timely and safe manner.

### ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Students are required to perform the following essential functions of the DPT program:

- **COMMUNICATION FUNCTIONS**
  - Read, understand, and communicate information in written and spoken formats using the English language.
  - Interpret and respond to the verbal, non-verbal, and written communications of others in an appropriate, professional manner.
  
- **AFFECTIVE FUNCTIONS**
  - Establish, value, and continue to develop professional, respectful, empathetic relationships with individuals from all lifestyles, cultures, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities.
  - Develop, value, and maintain effective working relationships with faculty, students, professional colleagues, peers, patients/clients, families, and the general public.
  - Meet externally imposed deadlines and time requirements.
  - React effectively in challenging situations with use of appropriate resources.
  - Demonstrate an ability to function effectively in complex, highly stimulating environments.
  - Demonstrate responsibility for self-directed assessment, reflection, and professional growth.
  - Demonstrate core values of honesty, integrity, and accountability for the consequences of one's own actions.
  - Demonstrate ethical behavior, proper judgement, and decision making skills.
  
- **COGNITIVE FUNCTIONS**
  - Demonstrate self-management skills including planning, organizing, time management, and adhering to legal/regulatory requirements.

- Use a variety of sources, including reading material, lecture, discussion, observation, and physical examinations to:
  - Recall, interpret, extrapolate and apply information.
  - Measure, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information.
  - Gather and prioritize information needed to solve a problem.
  - Respond appropriately to emerging problems and potentially hazardous situations by making timely judgments to react effectively and seek assistance when necessary.
  - Accept and apply constructive feedback.
- PSYCHOMOTOR FUNCTIONS
  - Possess physical strength, stamina, balance, movement, hand-eye coordination, and dexterity required to perform patient care tasks in a manner that does not compromise the safety of self or others.
  - Perform intermittent physical activity of the whole body throughout an eight to twelve-hour period.
  - Engage in complex, coordinated movements needed during a variety of activities including skills lab practice; manual techniques, patient examination, intervention, and guarding.
  - Utilize auditory, visual, and tactile senses to receive information from written, spoken, and non-verbal communication mechanisms; observation of human structures; postures and movements; and equipment and or technology.
  - Quickly and appropriately react to sudden or unexpected events or movements of others.
- ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
  - The Bouvé College strives to meet the needs of diverse learners. Student who may need a reasonable accommodation for a disability should contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) via the following contact information:
    - Location: 20 Dodge Hall.
    - Phone: (617) 373-2675
    - TTY: Contact DRC via Relay 711
  - Students must register with the DRC and meet with a specialist prior to matriculation. If a disability develops while a student is enrolled in the University, the student is expected to contact the DRC as soon as practical to address his/her situation. Accommodations cannot be made retroactively.

Reference: Ingram, D. (1997). Opinions of Physical Therapy Education Program Directors on Essential Functions, *Physical Therapy*, 77(1), 37-45.