Public Disclosure Notice

The following public information is provided by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) regarding the

Physical Therapist Assistant Program
Polk State College
Winter Haven, Florida

CAPTE is a specialized accrediting agency that accredits physical therapy educational programs across the United States. The information presented below is in accord with CAPTE’s disclosure policy; staff of the Commission cannot comment further on questions specifically related to the physical therapist assistant education program at Polk State College.

On December 2, 2021, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education made the following decision regarding the physical therapist assistant education program at Polk State College:

SHOW CAUSE – CONTINUE PROBATIONARY ACCREDITATION

What is the program’s Accreditation Status?
Probationary Accreditation

Show Cause shall be considered notice of impending Withdrawal of Accreditation if evidence of sufficient improvement is not submitted by the institution prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of CAPTE. Probationary Accreditation is an accredited status; students who graduate from the program while it is on probation are considered to be graduates of an accredited program. Probationary accreditation indicates that there are conditions at the program that place the program’s accreditation in jeopardy and provides notice to the program and the public that if the program does not address the identified conditions, accreditation will be withdrawn.

Why is the program on probation?
CAPTE’s decision to Show Cause and Continue Probationary Accreditation is based on clear evidence of continuing circumstances that jeopardize the ability of the institution to sustain an accredited program as well as the program’s inability to demonstrate compliance with the Standards and Required Elements. The program was found to be out of compliance with the following element(s): 1C2, 4A, 4D, 4G.

What options does the program have to respond?
The decision to place a program on probation may not be appealed. The program has been asked to file a Compliance Report due March 1, 2022 that addresses the issues identified by the Commission. The Commission will review the Compliance Report at its April 22-26, 2022 meeting. Upon review of the report, the Commission may
- remove probation if the report satisfies the Commission’s concerns, or
- continue probation if the report satisfies some but not all of the Commission’s concerns, or
- withdraw accreditation if the report does not satisfy the Commission’s concerns and the Commission believes that the program is not making a good cause effort to do so.

Acknowledgement of Proposed Public Notice due to Accreditation staff no later than 14 calendar days following receipt of the decision, along with the official comments from the program or institution in regard to the decision, if any. CAPTE Rules of Practice and Procedure §4.5(c)(6)

I have received and reviewed the Public Notice comments. A response is attached: ☑Yes ☐No

Orathai Northern  VP, Workforce Ed & Econ Development 12/13/2021
Name Signature  Position  Date
December 13, 2021

Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)
3030 Potomac Avenue
Suite 100
Alexandria, VA 22305-3085

Dear Commission:

Polk State College acknowledges the receipt of the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education’s (CAPTE) Summary of Action and is aware of the notification requirements and the requirement for completion of a Compliance Report.

The College takes this issue very seriously and is continuing to address the concerns cited. The core faculty members are working with a nationally known consultant who specializes in Physical Therapist Assistant Education; collectively the core faculty members and the consultant are working to ensure compliance with CAPTE standards.

Since the last compliance report, the program has earned compliance with standard 8A; the program hired the core faculty consisting of program director Mary Krell, PT, MPT and the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) Regina Tino, PTA.

For Standard 1C2, which was determined to be non-compliant, the College continues to assess student learning outcomes at the course and program level. The college recognizes that the new program faculty have implemented and will continue to implement changes to address identified problems in the curriculum and program policies to improve graduate success on the NPTE. They are implementing a variety of exam preparation strategies throughout the curriculum and are striving to assist prior cohorts in exam preparation strategies.

The College is addressing Standards 4A, 4D, and 4G regarding the credentials, newness, and expertise of core and associated faculty members. The core and associated faculty have identified professional development plans to address CAPTE’s concerns and are currently going through an evaluation process from the fall term.

The specifics will be outlined in more detail in the College’s Compliance Report; however, Polk State is confident that the significant structural changes to the program that are already in process will result in compliance. The program has transitioned the admissions process to a merit-based, competitive system which will take effect in the 2022 application period.

Polk County’s need for skilled Physical Therapist Assistants is growing and the College is committed to preserving and improving the program in order to serve the community and provide rewarding career opportunities for our graduates.

Regards,

Orathai Northern, Ph.D.
Vice President, Workforce Education and Economic Development