

Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
American Physical Therapy Association

SUMMARY OF ACTION

Physical Therapist Assistant Program
Mercyhurst University
501 East 38th Street
Erie, PA
16546

On October 29, 2024, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education made the following decision regarding the Physical Therapist Assistant education program at Mercyhurst University.

Status: ACCREDITATION

Action Taken: WARNING

Effective Date: October 29, 2024

**Information Used to
Make Decisions:** Compliance Report

Reason for Decision: The Commission has placed the program on Warning; the accreditation status of the program remains unchanged. This decision was made in order to allow the program to: 1) submit evidence which documents compliance with the Standards and Required Elements; and 2) demonstrate why probationary accreditation should not be granted at the next meeting of the Commission.

The Commission's decision to place the program on Warning is based on clear evidence of circumstances that may jeopardize the capability of the sponsoring institution to provide acceptable education experiences. The decision is also based on the program's level of compliance with the Standards and Required Elements and on the expectation that the program will, within two years of first being cited, bring itself into compliance with the following elements noted in the Commission's Findings: **1C2**.

That compliance must be appropriately documented in a Compliance Report which will be used by the Commission to determine compliance with the elements noted in the Findings and to monitor compliance with all the required elements. Failure to provide evidence of compliance in the identified areas will place the program in jeopardy of being placed on probation.

Warning shall be in effect only until the next regularly scheduled meeting of CAPTE at which time CAPTE will act on the information available to it. Warning shall be considered notice of impending Probationary Accreditation if evidence of improvement is not submitted by the institution prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of CAPTE.

Next Activity: Compliance Report due February 1, 2025

NOTICES

TWO YEAR LIMITATION ON BEING OUT OF COMPLIANCE

CAPTE's recognition by the United States Department of Education requires a limitation of two years for programs to be out of compliance with a required element [34 CFR 602.20(a)(2)(iii)]. When, after review of a Compliance Report, the program remains out of compliance with any required element and sufficient progress toward compliance has not been demonstrated, CAPTE may act to place the program on probationary accreditation or withdraw accreditation. CAPTE will place the program on probationary accreditation when a program remains out of compliance for 18 months. If the program continues to be out of compliance with any required element at the end of the two-year period following the initial finding that the program is out of compliance, CAPTE will withdraw accreditation unless CAPTE judges the program, for good cause, to be making significant efforts to come into compliance with the standards and required elements. CAPTE defines a good cause effort as:

- (a) a completed comprehensive assessment of the problem/issue under review,
- (b) an appropriate plan for achieving compliance within a reasonable time frame not to exceed two years,
- (c) a detailed timeline for completion of the plan,
- (d) evidence that the plan has been implemented according to the established timeline, and
- (e) evidence that the implemented plan is showing results that provide reasonable assurance the program will achieve compliance within the allotted time frame.

It is the program's responsibility to make the case that a good cause effort has been made and continues to be in effect. During the extension for good cause, probationary accreditation status will be maintained, and the program's progress will be monitored. In no case, however, will an extension for good cause be longer than two years.

REQUIRED STATEMENT OF ACCREDITATION STATUS

Once a program has been accredited, and for as long as it remains accredited, the program must use the statement provided in §8.20 on all educational and promotional materials, including the institution/program web site, where the program's accreditation status is disclosed.

[INSERT Name of Program] at [INSERT Name of Institution] is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org ; website: http://www.capteonline.org . If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call [INSERT Direct Program Phone Number] or email [INSERT Direct Program Email Address].
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NOTE: If the institution offers other physical therapy programs not subject to accreditation by CAPTE (e.g., transitional DPT, post-professional degree program, residency or fellowship), the above statement must be edited to clearly indicate that the additional programs are not accredited by CAPTE. Additionally, the information available to the public regarding these programs must clearly state that they are not accredited by CAPTE.

ACCURATE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF THIS DECISION BY THE INSTITUTION

The institution and program must make accurate public disclosure of the accreditation or pre-accreditation status awarded to the program. Further, the United States Department of Education (USDE) requires all recognized accrediting agencies to provide for the public correction of incorrect or misleading

information an institution or program releases about accreditation or pre-accreditation status, contents of reports of on-site reviews, and accreditation or pre-accreditation actions with respect to the institution or program [34 CFR 602.23(d) and 602.23(e)]. If the institution or program chooses to disclose any additional information, beyond the accreditation or pre-accreditation status that is within the scope of the USDE rule, such disclosure also must be accurate. Any public disclosure of information within the scope of the rule must include the agency's street address, email address and phone number: Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; accreditation@apta.org; (703) 684-2782 or (703) 706-3245. If the Accreditation staff finds that an institution or program has released incorrect or misleading information within the scope of the USDE rule, then, acting on behalf of CAPTE the Accreditation staff will make public correction, and reserves the right to disclose this Summary of Action in its entirety for that purpose.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF DECISIONS BY CAPTE

Following all decisions, including decisions to place a program on warning, probation or show cause, or to deny candidacy, withdraw candidacy, withhold accreditation, or withdraw accreditation, the Accreditation staff will, within 24 hours of the official notification of the programs and institutions of the decisions, provide notice to the public by placing notice of the decisions on its web site.

RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT CHANGE(S)

The institution and program are responsible for notifying CAPTE of all reportable changes in the program prior to implementation. Unexpected changes are to be reported immediately after they occur. Reportable changes, some of which may require pre-approval, are described in Part 9 of CAPTE's *Rules of Practice and Procedure* (<https://www.capteonline.org/globalassets/capte-docs/capte-rules-practice-procedure.pdf>). **It is the program's responsibility to be familiar with these expectations and to provide notification of program changes as required.**