

**JACKSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

JSCC will provide training and services to any qualified person with disabilities who meets the academic standards and can fulfill the essential functions requisite to admission and/or participation in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program. These standards and essential functions provide an objective measure for decisions regarding whether a student is qualified to meet essential program and physical therapy professions requirements.

The essential function/standard categories and descriptions per the guidelines of the American Physical Therapy Association are as follows:

**Category**

**Essential Function Description**

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Ability for sufficient clinical thinking judgment

Examples:

1. Identify cause-effect relationships in the clinic
2. Perform and assess patient goals/plans
3. Respond to emergencies.
4. Apply universal precautions
5. Apply teaching and learning theories in health care

**INTERPERSONAL SKILLS**

Sufficient ability to interact with groups from a variety of backgrounds.

Examples:

1. Establish rapport with patients, clients and colleagues.
2. Recognize psychosocial impact of dysfunction/disability.
3. Integrate the needs of the patient and family into the plan of care

**COMMUNICATION ABILITY**

Ability to communicate in verbal and nonverbal form

Examples:

1. Effective use of the English language
2. Effective teaching skills
3. Appropriate documentation and interpretation of PT interventions and patient responses.

**MOBILITY SKILLS**

Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective physical therapy

Examples:

1. Calibrate and use equipment
2. Position patients/clients
3. Guard and assist with ambulation
4. Perform
  - a) full body ROM
  - b) non-sharps debridement
  - c) transfers
  - d) CPR
  - e) physical agentsor use of
5. Ability to perform the following activities using proper body mechanics:
  - a) lift
  - b) carry
  - c) pull
  - d) push
  - e) reach
  - f) stand

- g) walk
- h) kneel
- i) bend
- j) climb
- k) balance
- l) operate electrical equipment

## HEARING ABILITY

Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs

Examples:

1. Hear and monitor alarms, emergency signals, and cries for help
2. Respond to a timer
3. Effectively communicate with patients/clients

## VISUAL ABILITY

Visual ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs

Examples:

1. Observe patient responses
2. Monitor vital signs and read stopwatch
3. Read all pertinent materials and equipment specifications for patient care

## TACTILE ABILITY

Tactile ability for physical assessment

Examples:

1. Perform palpation, physical assessment of intervention
2. Apply (appropriate) resistance during exercises or assessment.

## COPING SKILLS

Ability to perform in stressful environments or during impending deadlines

Examples:

1. Appropriate management of an intensive training program, both academic schedule and clinical situations
2. Work under appropriate time constraints
3. Appropriate psych-social response to patients/clients with disability, cultural differences, various intellectual backgrounds and terminal illness
4. Perform concurrent tasks

## BEHAVIORAL SKILLS

Ability to demonstrate professionalism

Examples:

1. Practice safely, ethically, and legally
2. Participate in lifelong learning
3. Demonstrate continued professional growth and development
4. Demonstrate respect for self and others
5. Project an image of professionalism including appearance, dress and confidence

These essential functions are to assist a student with a disability in determining whether accommodations or modifications are necessary. Each of these functions are reflected in PTA course objectives and can provide an objective measure for the student, advisors, and program officials to use in making informed decisions as to whether the student is qualified to meet the necessary requirements.

A student who is not able to fulfill these essential functions may enroll in a PTA course if reasonable accommodations or modifications can be made to assist instruction and expected student performance. Such students must make a request for such accommodations or modifications to the program director at least two weeks before registration in the PTA courses. Reasonable accommodations and modifications will be provided if deemed possible by program officials.