The University of Utah, Department of Physical Therapy Clinical Education Program provides an environment for integrating the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to provide quality patient care. The Program focuses on the common process of physical therapy practice involving professional behavior, communication, patient examination, and interventions; graduating entry-level, generalist practitioners. Clinical Education, as an essential component of the overall curriculum, is comprised of early clinical experiences (part-time), formal internships (full-time), and may include optional clinical experiences. Clinical Education is scheduled in a variety of practice settings representing the scope of physical therapy practice and occurs under the direct supervision of licensed physical therapists with a minimum of one-year of professional PT experience. Each clinical education course is designed to correlate with the student’s academic preparation by increasing the number of skills and complexity of problem solving. In the final clinical internship, the intern is expected to integrate all knowledge and skills learned in the classroom, laboratory and prior clinical experiences, achieving entry-level performance and behaviors. Students must exhibit a satisfactory level of performance for each clinical education course to progress in the DPT program. Performance expectations for the experiences and internships are explained and distributed to students and clinical sites in advance.

Each student is expected to actively participate in the clinical education process, sharing in the planning and evaluation of learning experiences. The Department is committed to evaluating the quality of all Program activities. The Clinical Education program incorporates a system of evaluation designed to assess the quality of student performance, clinical faculty performance, and activities of the Director of Clinical Education.

The clinical faculty is regarded as an integral part of the collegial environment in which our students are educated. The Program is committed to a plan for clinical faculty development which is designed to incorporate a variety of elements leading to professional growth. This exchange of services by the academic and clinical faculty promotes a cooperative attitude among all involved in the preparation of our future professional colleagues in physical therapy. The University of Utah offers at a minimum an annual opportunity for clinical instructors to become APTA Credentialed Clinical Instructors & Advanced Clinical Instructors. A clinical faculty privilege is that the 1.5 CEU course fee for each course is co-sponsored by the Department of Physical Therapy for University of Utah CCCE’s/CI’s.

The physical therapy program is a rigorous three-year program. Students are required to complete a total of four full-time clinical internships, each eight to ten weeks in length. The first internship is completed during Summer Term following the first academic year, the second during Summer Term following the second academic year, and the third and fourth during Spring Semester of the third year. The standard University schedule is modified during these three terms in order to accommodate the clinical internships. Students are also required to complete one part-time clinical experience during the first academic year. This consists of student clinical observation and/or clinical participation within a physical therapy clinic 4 hours per week during the Spring Semester first year. Additional optional part-time clinical experiences are available.

Internships are coordinated with the DCE while taking student desire, student need for a particular experience, and availability of clinical sites into account. Since the student is being prepared as a “general practitioner of physical therapy,” the student fulfills requirements within the following clinical specialty areas:

1. inpatient acute care (or other setting with at least a 50% inpatient acute care component),
2. outpatient orthopedic practice,
3. neurological rehabilitation (pediatric or adult / IP or OP), and
4. geriatrics or optional* based on student preference and learning needs.

*an optional site can only be chosen if the student can account for significant geriatric experiences within other previous or planned internships.

Students are strongly encouraged to complete at least one of their internships outside the State of Utah. In some cases, if there are not enough in state sites to fulfill a student’s needs, then the student may be placed outside the state.
The Clinical Education Program uses the APTA: Clinical Performance Instrument (PT CPI Web) to evaluate student clinical performance. The APTA: Clinical Performance Instrument evaluates professional as well as knowledge-based skills including, but not limited to cognitive and manual skills of patient evaluation, program planning, treatment implementation/modification, discharge planning, patient/family education and special setting skills.

Both clinical instructor and the student use this tool to evaluate student performance and to collaborate to achieve a successful clinical experience. The student is primarily responsible to ensure timely and appropriate completion of the tools, and is responsible to submit all necessary materials to the DCE in order to receive credit/grade for the course. Overall, the Clinical Education Program provides students a structured clinical mentorship throughout the DPT program, leading to competent entry-level practice.

Students must exhibit a satisfactory level of performance for each clinical experience and internship. Grading expectations for the clinical experiences and internships are explained and distributed to students and clinical instructors in advance (note the Quick Reference and Course Syllabi). At any time during the clinical experiences or internships, if safety issues, clinical performance, or professional behavior become a major concern, a student may be immediately withdrawn from the site and the experience.

Clinical Education Internship Sites:
Clinical site selection and development is the responsibility of the Director of Clinical Education. The University of Utah presently has tremendous support for on-going clinical internships in Utah, throughout the United States, and select international placement sites. Clinical sites are chosen on the basis of their reputation, their philosophy of clinical education, the type of facility, unique opportunities offered to students, and the clinical expertise or experience of the clinical instructors. Clinical sites provide clinical site information via the APTA Clinical Site Information Forms, which are available for student review via WebCT, along with former intern evaluations. Clinical sites are selected and finalized by September each year for the following calendar year. Selected placements are notified by confirmation letter to the site CCCE. Internship/Experience Request forms for the next calendar year’s placements are distributed in the Spring of each year according to the national voluntary mailing date, and are requested back on or before April 1st.

The Clinical Education component is the key integrative aspect for physical therapy practice within the Doctor of Physical Therapy program and the clinical coordinators/instructors are central to the student’s attainment of entry-level skills! Thank you for the extensive time and energy you contribute to our students’ development!
## OVERALL CLINICAL EDUCATION INTERNSHIP/EXPERIENCE

### REQUESTS & PLACEMENT SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February (Local) – March (National)</td>
<td>Requests sent to clinical sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On or before April 1</td>
<td>Requests returned to UofU Department of Physical Therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>April – May</td>
<td>Clinical interns review options</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews conducted PRN per clinical sites</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Come / First Serve placements PRN</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rolling internship lottery</td>
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<tr>
<td>March – May</td>
<td>Rolling internship lottery for second year, third year placements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Placement Letters to Sites for full time internships, Years 2, 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Rolling internship lottery for incoming first year students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Placement Letters to Sites for full time internships, Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August – September</td>
<td>Final internship placements – all finalized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Year 1

- **PHTH 6800 (1)**
  - Clinical Experience I
  - Required
  - 4 hrs/week for 10-12 wks

### Year 1-2

- **PHTH 6820 (1)**
  - Clinical Experience II
  - Optional
  - 4 hrs/week for 10-12 wks or equivalent

### Year 1-3

- **PHTH 6830 (1)**
  - Clinical Experience III
  - Optional
  - 4 hrs/week for 10-12 wks or equivalent

### Year 2-3

- **PHTH 6850 (1)**
  - Clinical Experience IV
  - Optional
  - 4 hrs/week for 10-12 wks or equivalent

### Year 3

- **PHTH 7960 (1-5)**
  - Independent Study
  - Optional
  - 4 hrs/week for 10-12 wks or equivalent

- **PHTH 7810 (9)**
  - Clinical Internship I
  - Required
  - 10 weeks full-time
  - 400 clinical hr equivalent

- **PHTH 7840 (9)**
  - Clinical Internship II
  - Required
  - 10 weeks full-time
  - 400 clinical hr equivalent

- **PHTH 7860 (6)**
  - Clinical Internship III
  - Required
  - 8 weeks full-time
  - 320 clinical hr equivalent

- **PHTH 7880 (6)**
  - Clinical Internship IV
  - Required
  - 8 weeks full-time
  - 320 clinical hr equivalent