

**PHYSICAL THERAPY
POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS
FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FSA) RECIPIENTS**

June 29, 2013

1. SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

CFR SOURCE:

Compilation of Federal Regulations (CFR):

34 CFR 668.34 – Student Assistance General Provisions

34 CFR 668.16(e) – Administrative Capability

34 CFR 668.32(f) – Student Eligibility - General

1.1 “AT LEAST AS STRICT...”

The faculty endeavors to provide a supportive collegial learning environment to foster each student's competence in the classroom and in the clinic. The curriculum of the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) curriculum is sequential.

All DPT students are required to maintain a minimum semester and cumulative GPA of 3.000 to remain in good academic standing. Additionally, students must complete and pass each clinical education course in sequence as described in the Student Handbook.

The Program in Physical Therapy reserves the right to dismiss or to deny registration, readmission, or graduation to any student who in the judgment of the program is determined to be unsuited to the study or practice of physical therapy. Hence, failure to progress, i.e. numerous marginal grades or ethically/morally unacceptable conduct, for a student seeking to enter the physical therapy profession can be sufficient grounds for withdrawal.

1.2 CONSISTENT APPLICATION

Students receiving federal financial aid must meet the same criteria for matriculation and graduation as all other students enrolled in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program.

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The standard term of enrollment in the Program is 3 years, which equates to 8 academic semesters of combined academic and clinical course work (Year I Fall, Spring, Summer; Year II Fall, Spring, Summer; Year III, Fall, Spring). As the curriculum is prescribed and sequential, it is expected that students will complete all required courses in the 8 semester calendar.

For a student to be in good academic standing, the following progression is followed:

1. Complete each semester of courses in Year I (Fall, Spring, Summer) with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.000 per semester.
2. After Year I, continue to be in good academic standing with a minimum grade point average of 3.000 per semester in Year II fall and spring.
3. After Year II, continue to be in good academic standing with a minimum grade point average of 3.000 after Fall III.
4. Satisfactorily complete, with a grade of "Pass," Clinical Education I and II during Fall II and Summer II respectively.
5. Satisfactorily complete, with a grade of "Pass," the Clinical Internship during Spring III.

1.3 REGULAR EVALUATIONS

The progress and grade point average of every student will be reviewed by the Program's Academic Standing Committee after the posting of grades at the end of each semester. Based on each student's academic progress, the Committee will make recommendations to the Financial Aid department regarding eligibility for federal aid in the next semester.

1.4 GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

Students are required to maintain a minimum semester and cumulative GPA of 3.000 to remain in good academic standing. Additionally, students must complete and pass each clinical education course in sequence as described in the Student Handbook.

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A grade of "C+" or above or a grade of "pass" (P) accounts for credit for successful completion of a course toward the DPT degree and is accepted as the basis for advancement to subsequent courses. Pass grades are not used in computation of the grade point average.

In the computation of grade point averages for the DPT program, quality points are awarded on the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Points	Quality Level of Achievement
A+	98 - 100	4.33	Reserved for highly exceptional achievement
A	94-97	4.00	Excellent, outstanding achievement
A-	90-93	3.67	Very good achievement
B+	87 - 89	3.33	Solid achievement
B	83 -86	3.00	Good
B-	80-82	2.67	Acceptable but below what is expected at the graduate level
C+	75-79	2.33	Marginal achievement
F	0-74	0.00	Failure to meet graduate standards

Pass (P): A "pass" is assigned for successful completion of the course requirements, as documented in the course syllabus, for courses that use a pass/fail grade scale. A grade of "P" is not included in the computation of the GPA.

Students are expected to complete all course assignments, examinations and clinical education experiences on time. There is no automatic grade of "incomplete" (INC). For more information on incompletes and other special circumstances, please see section 1.6.

A student will receive an "F" grade in any course in which the student fails to pass the course standards as described by the instructor and stated in the

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course syllabus. As the curriculum is sequential, a failure in any course including clinical education may lead to withdrawal from the program.

1.5 MAXIMUM TIME FRAME AND PACE OF COMPLETION

The standard term of enrollment in the Program is 3 years, which equates to 8 academic semesters of combined academic and clinical course work (Year I Fall, Spring, Summer; Year II Fall, Spring, Summer; Year III, Fall, Spring).

As the curriculum is prescribed and sequential, it is expected that students will complete all required courses in the 8 semester calendar.

A minimum of **113 credits**, which include all required academic coursework and 2 elective courses taken for credit, are required for all students to meet graduation requirements.

Additional elective courses for credit including the research and service learning practicums **and skill-based courses** can be taken for the maximum number of allowable credits at **125**. Successful completion of all clinical education experiences is necessary for receipt of the DPT degree. As this is a prescribed curriculum, all courses with their corresponding credits are taken in the semester offered., **Any incomplete grade given in a required course due to extenuating circumstances must be completed prior to the start of the next academic semester. An incomplete grade given for any clinical education experience will necessitate either one or two additional semesters beyond the prescribed 8 semester curriculum. As clinical education is 0 credits, students will be allowed to matriculate into the next academic semester as GPA is not affected. Students extending beyond 8 semesters, to complete clinical education requirements, will be considered full-time and will be charged a \$500 extended clinical education fee along with prescribed university fees per semester.**

Pace of completion is 100% during each semester and clinical education experience. In extenuating circumstances students can request a Leave of Absence (LOA) for 1 academic year, and return the following year to retake courses in the semester during which the LOA was granted.

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1.6 EFFECT/TREATMENT OF “ATYPICAL” COURSES/SITUATIONS

Please find below how atypical situation affect GPA, maximum timeframe and pace of completion.

1.6.1 EFFECT OF LEAVES OF ABSENCE, VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWALS AND INCOMPLETES

The program’s withdrawal policy is covered in the Student Handbook under Section III: Policies and Procedures. Students do not have the option of withdrawing from any of the required courses; they can drop and add electives during the semesters in which the electives are offered but must complete the minimum elective requirements as outlined in the Handbook.

Any student in good academic standing, who takes a medical leave of absence during a clinical education experience or is withdrawn from a clinical education experience by one of the Directors of Clinical Education for failure to meet established criteria for passing the affiliation, will be permitted to complete the requirement for receipt of the DPT degree in more than the required three-year sequence of 8 semesters. A grade of incomplete will be given for the clinical education experience.

Any student, under the above conditions, can continue for the equivalent of ten semesters.

Candidates for the DPT degree who are permitted to complete requirements in more than the required three year sequence (8 semesters) shall be charged an Extended **Clinical Education** fee of \$500.00 for each semester while not part of the regular curriculum of the DPT program. This applies to any student who takes a medical leave of absence during a clinical education experience or is withdrawn from a clinical education experience by one of the Directors of Clinical Education

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for failure to meet established criteria for passing the affiliation. During the Extended Curriculum semester(s), the student will also be charged for the student health service fee, medical insurance premium and CUMC Network fee. Although clinical education is 0 credits, students are considered to have full-time status and are therefore eligible for financial aid in the form of federal student aid.

1.6.2 EFFECT OF INVOLUNTARY WITHDRAWALS

The Program in Physical Therapy reserves the right to dismiss or to deny registration, readmission, or graduation to any student who in the judgment of the program is determined to be unsuited to the study or practice of physical therapy. Hence, failure to progress, i.e. numerous marginal grades or ethically/morally unacceptable conduct, for a student seeking to enter the physical therapy profession can be sufficient grounds for withdrawal.

1.6.3 EFFECT OF REPETITIONS

Course work may only be repeated if a student takes a Leave of Absence and receives "Incompletes" in the courses being taken during the semester of the requested leave. If the student returns the following year, same semester and successfully repeats the courses, they may then have the "Incompletes" converted to course grades.

1.7 STATUS DEFINITIONS

Financial Aid Warning: Students on Academic Probation at the end of the a term will be placed on Financial Aid Warning, indicating they must re-establish good academic standing by the end of the subsequent term or they will become ineligible for federal financial aid..

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Financial Aid Probation: Students who Students who are placed on Financial Aid Warning, but who fail to re-establish satisfactory academic progress by the end of the term will be ineligible to receive federal financial aid for the subsequent term. However, they may appeal this decision. If the appeal is successful, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation.

Details on these statuses are in section 1.8 below.

1.8 PROVISION FOR A FINANCIAL AID WARNING STATUS

Only one, one-semester financial aid warning is allowable to students throughout matriculation in the OPT program.

Students whose grade point average at the end of the Fall I semester is below the minimum 3.000 but no lower than 2.750 can remain in the program and matriculate into Spring I courses. Students will be placed on academic probation by the program and will also receive a Financial Aid Warning for the Spring I semester from the Office of Student Financial Planning. Students on Financial Aid Warning will be eligible to continue to receive financial aid during this spring semester.

Students whose academic standing is not raised to the minimum grade point average of 3.000 by the end of the term for which they are on Financial Aid Warning, will be ineligible for federal financial aid for the subsequent semester. Students can appeal financial aid termination as outlined under the Appeal Process. Students will continue on academic probation by the program and will be allowed to matriculate into the next term..

Per the Student Handbook, any student whose academic standing is not raised to the program's minimum standard of a 3.000 cumulative grade point average by the end of Summer I will be dismissed from the program.

1.9 APPEALS

Students with extenuating circumstances may appeal the determination that they are not meeting satisfactory academic progress requirements for continuation of their financial aid.

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The student and academic advisor must submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal form with complete documentation to the Office of Student Financial Planning.

The student must also provide a written appeal that includes the following information/explanation:

1. What caused the work in the DPT program to fall below acceptable academic standing? Be specific.
2. How have these issues been resolved?
3. How does the student intend to maintain good academic standing and progress toward the DPT degree if the appeal is granted?

The appeal will be reviewed by the Executive Director of the Office of Student Financial Planning and the program's Academic Standing Committee and the student will be notified of the decision. The appeal may be approved semester-by-semester by a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Contract.

1.9.1 ACADEMIC PLANS – SAP Contract

For the DPT program, the Academic Plan is called a SAP Contract. Students placed on a Contract are eligible for financial aid strictly according to the terms of the Contract. The Contract is an agreement between the student, the academic advisor in concert with the Academic Standing Committee, and the Office of Student Financial Planning. Any deviation by the student from the terms of the contract will result in the forfeiture of future financial aid eligibility and possible involuntary withdrawal from the program.

1.10 RESTORING ELIGIBILITY

Students, who were not eligible for financial aid during Summer I, can have their eligibility reinstated for Fall II if they successfully improve their cumulative grade point average to the program minimum standard of 3.000. Students must maintain the minimum 3.000 as per 2, 3, and 4 above under Requirements to progress through the final two years of the program.

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During Year II or Year III, students whose cumulative grade point average falls below the program minimum standard of 3.000 during any semester or who do not achieve a passing grade in any clinical education experience will be dismissed from the program.

1.11 NOTIFICATIONS

Per this policy, the Office of Financial Planning and the Academic Advisor will notify the student in writing when:

- The student is placed on Financial Aid Warning
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- An appeal for financial aid eligibility is either approved (with the student being placed on Financial Aid Probation) or denied
- Eligibility is reinstated after Financial Aid Warning or Probation is cleared