Physical Therapist Assistant

Associate in Applied Science Degree

The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program combines courses in general education and physical therapy with supervised clinical experiences in area clinics, hospitals, and private practices. The PTA program at Mercer County Community College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; 703-706-3245 www.capteonline.org

Graduates are eligible to take the National Physical Therapy Examination for licensure as physical therapist assistants and be recognized by the State of New Jersey Department of Law & Public Safety, Division of Consumer Affairs, State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners, which regulates the practice of physical therapy in the state of New Jersey.

PTAs work under the supervision and direction of a physical therapist and are employed by hospitals, pediatric, geriatric, and private practice physical therapy facilities.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

• Communicate effectively with other members of the health care team, patients and their families;
• Provide patient care and physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist;
• Perform patient assessment techniques including joint range of motion, manual muscle testing, and measurement for assistive devices;
• Assist patients in gait training activities, body mechanics principles, and therapeutic exercise;
• Utilize clinical decision-making skills in the performance of physical therapy interventions.

Applicants must have a high school diploma or the equivalent with at least one year of a high school laboratory science. Students who did not complete at least one year of a high school laboratory science and those students whose background in the sciences is old or weak may be expected to complete one or more of the following courses: Physical Science Concepts (PHY 111), Introductory Chemistry (CHE 100), Biological Science Concepts (BIO 113). Full acceptance into the program requires satisfactory performance on the college skills placement test or completion of any required remediation.

Enrollment in the program is limited and based upon a petitioning process. If the number of qualified applicants for the Physical Therapist Assistant program exceeds available openings, acceptance will be made in accordance with procedures published separately. Contact the Enrollment Services office or the Math, Health Science & Health Professions division for a copy of the eligibility requirements and acceptance procedure.

All Health Profession majors are required to undergo a criminal background check prior to commencing the clinical portion of the professional phase of their respective program. A prior criminal history may prevent applicants from participation in the PTA program and ultimately licensure.