

A Novel Approach to the Orthopedic Lab Practical: A One-on-One Client-Based Experience

- In order to prepare physical therapy students for a high level of function, we need to develop active learners and critical thinkers who are able to function professionally and deliver effective, quality care to an increasingly diverse patient/client population.
- In *A Normative Model of Physical Therapist Professional Education*, the vision of physical therapist professional education includes **dynamic learning experiences**.



In Class Clinical Application Promotes Student Success

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- Future healthcare professions will be continually faced with unique and ambiguous client problems in the clinical setting during which they are forced to stop, think, and problem solve.
- **Problem:** Students were lacking an experience working directly with clients within the Orthopedic Physical Therapy Curriculum
- **Solution:** A Client-based end-of-semester lab practical with individuals with true musculoskeletal impairments in PHTH 517 Fall Semester and PHTH 518 Spring Semester
 - 32 community-based clients with orthopedic dysfunctions participated
 - 60 minute session: 20 minute evaluation, 25 minute treatment, 15 minute home program instruction
- **Outcomes:** Critical Thinking, Integration of Course Material, and Professional Values were evident via **student feedback**
 - **Client feedback** praised the student's professionalism, manual techniques, and active listening skills.
 - 97% of clients rated their experience as "highly positive"



Theme	Sample Student Comment
Critical Thinking	"I need to look at the whole client, not just small pieces, and that really made me stop and think about the whole process." "I realized I need to be open-minded and adaptable to change when working with a patient – each patient has their own story and needs our attention." "This type of setting really allowed me to test myself in a more relaxed setting without feeling judged on every decision."
Integration	"This practical allowed me to put all the pieces together from the semester, and it made it much clearer." "This helped prepare me for my clinical rotation by treating a patient with true orthopedic problems, versus a classmate."
Professional Values	"I learned so much about myself and the importance of my verbal and nonverbal postures." "I learned I can really help someone relieve their pain and have a positive impact on the community."