

Physical Therapy

College of Health
and Human Services

Department of Physical Therapy

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M.P.T., Master of Physical Therapy

Physical Therapy

Physical therapists, or PTs, are health care professionals who evaluate and treat people with health problems resulting from injury, disease, or biomechanical dysfunction. Physical therapists are integral members of the primary care team and are involved in prevention of disability and promotion of positive health. They are also acting consultants in restorative care.

Physical therapy includes the following:

1. Examining and evaluating patients with health-related conditions, impairments, functional limitations, and disability in order to determine diagnosis, prognosis, and intervention;
2. Alleviating impairments and functional limitations by designing, implementing, and modifying therapeutic interventions;
3. Preventing injury, impairments, functional limitations, and disability while promoting and maintaining fitness, health, and quality of life in all age populations; and
4. Engaging in consultation, education, and research.

Master of Physical Therapy

Physical therapy practice today is based on a well-developed body of scientific and clinical knowledge. Physical therapists apply knowledge from the basic, behavioral, and social sciences. Physical therapists must also demonstrate effective communication skills. Insight and sensitivity to the unique needs of diverse populations is essential to effectively maximize the individual's functional potential in society.

The physical therapy student will be educated with a thorough knowledge base and will be capable of critical thinking, ethical practice, and service to meet the changing



needs of society. Students learn effective analysis and interpretation of data with which to diagnose neuromusculoskeletal movement dysfunction, make treatment-planning decisions, and predict outcomes based on sound research principles.

The graduate will be prepared to assume the multidimensional roles of the master clinician, including patient care, education, consultation, and administration of physical therapy services in the broad spectrum of physical therapy practice settings and across the broad age spectrum from neonates to geriatrics.

Individuals must possess a baccalaureate degree and complete all prerequisite requirements prior to beginning the professional major. Following successful completion of the professional curriculum, the student receives the M.P.T. Degree.

Completion of a postgraduate internship is required to be eligible to seek a license to practice physical therapy in the state of California.

At present, the program is a six semester full-time course of study that prepares students for entry-level practice in a variety of clinical settings. The curriculum design is a regional integrated approach to patient management with special emphasis on problem solving. Substantial revisions in the master's program are being considered and will be implemented no later than the fall semester of 2003. Students preparing for admission are advised to stay closely in

touch with the program for details. Changes will be distributed in brochures as they are finalized and posted on the department's Website at <http://www.csufresno.edu/physicaltherapy>.

Faculty and Facilities

The faculty is composed of physical therapists that collectively have advanced preparation in all major areas of physical therapy. Most have earned doctorates or advanced specialty certification. Together they represent extensive years of clinical experience. Many faculty members continue to engage in practice in tandem with their faculty responsibilities. Several have held significant positions of leadership in professional associations and have authored textbooks used nationally; several also publish regularly in professional journals. Their efforts have been recognized frequently with prestigious awards from the profession and the community.

Clinical laboratory experiences are conducted in a variety of health care facilities throughout the state of California and out of state on a limited basis.

Career Opportunities

Physical therapists practice in acute care or subacute care hospitals, private physical therapy offices, community health centers, industrial health centers, sports facilities, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, home health agencies, schools, or pediatric centers. Others work in research institutions or teach in colleges and universities.