

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	<p>"I need to look at the whole client, not just small pieces, and that really made me stop and think about the whole process."</p> <p>"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."</p> <p>"This type of setting really allowed me to test myself in a more relaxed setting without feeling judged on every decision."</p>
Integration	<p>"This practical allowed me to put all the pieces together from the semester, and it made it much clearer."</p> <p>"This helped prepare me for my clinical rotation by treating a patient with true orthopedic problems, versus a classmate."</p>
Professional Values	<p>"I learned so much about myself and the importance of my verbal and nonverbal postures."</p> <p>"I learned I can really help someone relieve their pain and have a positive impact on the community."</p>