

Offer summer support to students taking the National Physical Therapy Examination for licensure after graduation.

CURRENT CHALLENGE:

Pass rates on the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) for the Doctor of Physical Therapy program students: Fresno State Department of Physical Therapy recently transitioned into the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program. The DPT program enrolls 32 post professional students every year for an intensive 3 year curriculum. All DPT students need to pass the National Physical Therapy Examination before they can start their physical therapy practice in the State of California. While the graduation rates for DPT programs have been almost 100%, the pass rates on the licensure exam have never been 100%.

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

Offer summer support to students taking the Licensure exam after graduation:

The DPT students graduate in Spring semester as one cohort. All the students take the NPTE exam in the third week of July. One of the common feedback from the students who didn't pass the NPTE exam last year was that they didn't get time to prepare during the intensive last semester, and when they started preparing they didn't have access to asking questions from faculty as all Fresno State DPT teaching faculty have summer appointments. The solution to the problem is to fund summer stipends for two faculty members to create a 6 week intensive course for the summer session. The session will run from June 1- July 15th and will incorporate regular teaching sessions with the students online and in-person. The two faculty members will also be in charge of acquiring additional resources like group practice exams and inviting content area experts to cover any specialty topics. The reason this cannot be a summer semester class is that students graduate in May and they don't pay summer fees.

BENEFITS TO FRESNO STATE:

Pass percentage on NPTE exam is a key criteria for The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. Recent visit by the commission in November 2015 pointed out that our pass rates are below national average. Increasing the pass rates on NPTE will help Fresno State remain compliant with the accreditation standards. The pass percentage also helps in the recruitment of new students. As it is mandatory to reveal previous years pass rates on department website, it is the most common criteria used by students in selecting and applying to Fresno DPT program. Showing the commitment to pass percentages also gives the current students in the program confidence that their time and money invested in the three year program will eventually result in them being clinicians. Finally, providing additional summer support after the students have graduated resonates well with the strategic priority of enhancing teaching and learning through innovative practices that contribute to the development of the whole student, and life-long success.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: