

**The University of Texas at El Paso  
College of Health Sciences  
Doctor of Physical Therapy Program**

**PT 6214**

**Physical Therapy Across the Lifespan**

**Spring 2025**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Credit Hours: 2**

**Contact Hours: 30 hours** - Lecture: 30 hours; Lab: 0 hours; Clinic: 0 hours

**Schedule:** Wednesdays, 8:00 to 10:00, Room 126

**Coordinator/Instructor(s):**

Faculty: Sam Singleton, PT, DPT, OCS, SCS  
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**Course Description:** Course focuses on the physical therapy management of impairments related to changes across the lifespan to the neuromuscular, musculoskeletal, cardiopulmonary, integumentary, and neurosensory (communication, cognition, affective) systems. Special emphasis will be placed on aging adults.

**Course Prerequisites for DPT Students:** The UTEP DPT Program curriculum is a lock-step curriculum. Therefore, students must pass all courses in the prior semester of the DPT Program to enroll in courses in the subsequent semester. Faculty may consider exceptions for PT 6116 PT Capstone Project I and PT 6117 PT Capstone Project II.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- 1) Discuss the biological, physical, cognitive, psychological and social changes across the lifespan. (7A, 7C3) [Comprehension]
- 2) Discuss contemporary evidence-based health promotion to include fitness and wellness programs, screening and disease prevention across the lifespan(7D21) [Comprehension].
- 3) Discuss the assessment and impact of culture barriers and social determinants to healthcare across the lifespan (7C3. 7D22B) [Comprehension]
- 4) Discuss bone health and physical therapy management across the lifespan. (7A) [Comprehension]

- 5) Discuss pelvic health and physical therapy management across the lifespan. (7A, 7D1D, 7D10) [Comprehension]
- 6) Discuss the impact and interdisciplinary management of pediatrics disorders across the lifespan. (7A, 7C1) [Comprehension]
- 7) Discuss interdisciplinary geriatric assessment and the roles individual disciplines play in conducting and interpreting a comprehensive geriatric assessment (7A, 7D1, 7D2) [Comprehension, Evaluation]
- 8) Discuss and differentiate between depression, delirium and dementia including signs and symptoms and whom to notify if an older adult exhibits these related signs and symptoms. (7C, 7C2, 7C3) [Comprehension][Analysis]
- 9) Select and interpret appropriate evidence-based outcomes assessments for older adults to include a) balance, b) physical function, d) posture, e) pain, f) cognition and mental function, g) mood, and h) nutrition. (7A, 7D1) [Evaluation]
- 10) Assess specific risks and barriers to older adult safety, including falls, elder mistreatment (including need to report to authorities), and other risks in community, home and care environments. (7A, 7D1, 7D11) [Evaluation]
- 11) Select appropriate, evidence-based assistive technologies (orthoses or prostheses) across the lifespan (7D5, 7D18) [Knowledge]
- 12) Develop treatment plans based on best evidence and on person-centered care. Emphasis in this course is across the spectrum of function and includes primary prevention, health promotion, wellness, posture, osteoporosis, pelvic health, general debility & end-of-life care. (7D21) [Synthesis]
- 13) Analyze patient presentation (physical, mental, functional) and family/community support systems for older adults and their caregivers to facility care services such as community resources, home care, assisted living facilities, nursing facilities, sub-acute care facilities, palliative care and hospice care. (7D5, 7D13) [Analysis]
- 14) Explain how to access and share information about the healthcare benefits of programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, Veteran's Service, Social Security and other public programs with older adults and their caregivers/family members for understanding of case management. (7D, 7D16) [Comprehension]
- 15) Analyze complex simulated patient/client cases to establish the need for further examination or consultation by a physical therapist or a referral to another health care professional. This is Diagnostic Clinical Reasoning. (7D16) [Analysis]
- 16) Synthesize data from complex simulated patient/client cases to develop evidence supported and person-centered clinical therapeutic care plans. This is Therapeutic Clinical Reasoning. (7D16, 7D, 7D13, 7D5, 7C) [Comprehension]

**Methods of Instruction:** A wide variety of instructional methods are utilized to facilitate acquisition of course objectives. Both synchronous (all students together at the same time) and asynchronous approaches (complete lectures and activities on your own time by assigned due dates) are utilized. Methods include Lecture, assignments and readings, active and experiential learning activities, team-based learning, video tape self-analysis, role playing, and use of simulated patient cases, and self-reflection.

**Methods of Evaluation:** Student competence and attainment of course objectives are assessed using a variety of methods. These methods and their contribution to the final grade are listed in the table below.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Grade Composition</b>
Quizzes	20%
Assignments (support group, case study, exercise classes)	20%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%
Course evaluation (Extra Credit)	1%

**Grading Scale:** The following letter grade scale is used for the UTEP Doctor of Physical Therapy Program:

<b>Letter Grade Scale</b>	<b>Numerical Grade Scale</b>
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	75-79
F	Below 75

#### **Required Texts – Primary**

1. Avers, D., & Wong, R.A., Guccione's Geriatric Physical Therapy, 4th ed., Elsevier Mosby  
Hardcover: 9780323609128, eBook: 9780323610179

#### **Recommended Texts and Resources – Online and FREE thru UTEP library:**

1. APTA Geriatrics Academy Website. <https://aptageriatrics.org/>
2. APTA American Board of Physical Therapy Specialization Description of Specialty Practice. Geriatrics, Pediatrics
3. Polan, E. U., & Taylor, D. R. (2019). Journey across the life span: Human development and health promotion (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). F. A. Davis. 9780803674875
4. Avers, D., & Wong, R.A., Guccione's Geriatric Physical Therapy, 4th ed., Elsevier Mosby  
Hardcover: 9780323609128, eBook: 9780323610179
5. Criss MG, Wingood M, Staples WH, Southard V, Miller KL, Norris TL, Avers D, Ciolek CH, Lewis CB, Strunk ER. APTA Geriatrics' Guiding Principles for Best Practices in Geriatric Physical Therapy: An Executive Summary. J Geriatr Phys Ther. 2022 Apr-Jun 01;45(2):70-75. doi: 10.1519/JPT.0000000000000342. PMID: 35384940.  
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35384940>
6. Functional Performance in Older Adults, 4e, Bonder, 2018. Available Free to Students.  
[AccessPhysiotherapy Link](#)
7. Interactive Application: PhysioU Clinical Reasoning and Pattern Recognition (computer software) by Michael Wong ([link](#))
8. Staples, Geriatric Physical Therapy: A Case Study Approach, 2nd Ed., 2021. Available Free to Students. [AccessPhysiotherapy Link](#)

#### **Resources Available for Student Success:**

#### **Confidential Resources:**

- Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS): If you have or suspect a disability and need accommodation, you should contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148. You can also e-mail the office at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu) or go by their office in Union Building East, room 106 (next to the UTEP post office). For additional information, visit the CASS website at <http://sa.utep.edu/cass>.

**Additional Resources:**

- DPT Library Research Guide: <http://libguides.utep.edu/pt>
- UTEP provides a variety of student services and support. Please refer to the QR code below for a listing of campus resources or visit [https://www.utep.edu/advising/student\\_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html](https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html).



**University Policies:** All students are responsible for following UTEP policies and procedures found in the Handbook of Operating Procedures at <https://www.utep.edu/hoop/index.html>

**Program Policies:** All DPT students are responsible for following all policies and procedures documented in the current DPT Student Handbook. Course policies found in the DPT Student Handbook apply to all courses in the DPT curriculum. The current DPT Student Handbook may be found on the DPT Student Resources site on Blackboard.

**Academic Integrity:** The UTEP DPT Program has a “zero tolerance policy” for scholastic dishonesty. DPT students must demonstrate academic integrity at all times. The current DPT Student Handbook outlines specific definitions, expectations, details, and consequences related to academic integrity and scholastic dishonesty. Additional information related to academic integrity is available through the UTEP Division of Student Affairs at [www.utep.edu/student-affairs/osccr/student-conduct/academic-integrity.html](http://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/osccr/student-conduct/academic-integrity.html)

**Course-Specific Policies:**

1. **Attendance Policy - Absences:** Refer to current DPT Student Handbook “Attendance and Classroom Behavior” for the DPT Program policy. Additional course-specific policy are as follows:
  - As this is an intensive course, absences will be counted per hour.
  - No more than two (2) excused absences will be allowed.
  - Each excused absence thereafter will be considered as an unexcused absence and will result in a 5% decrease in the final grade for the course.
2. **Attendance Policy - Tardiness & Early Departures:** Refer to current DPT Student Handbook “Attendance and Classroom Behavior” for DPT Program policy.
3. **Electronic Devices:** Refer to current DPT Student Handbook “Electronic Devices” for DPT Program policy. Additional course-specific policy is as follows:
  - Electronic devices are to be used only for class work purposes
  - Students using electronic devices for other purposes will be asked to turn their devices off if it is the first time. If it is a second time, the instructor will collect the device and return it at

the end of the class. If it is a third time, the instructor will collect the device and return it at the end of the course.

- It will be a 5% decrease in the final grade per each time a student is using the device for other purposes.
4. **Professional Behavior Policy:** See DPT Student Handbook “Attendance and Classroom Behavior”, “Professional Behaviors” and “Unprofessional Behavior:” for general program policy. Additional course-specific is as follows:
    - Unprofessional behavior observed by the instructor will be discussed with the student.
    - Each unprofessional behavior observed by the instructor will result in a 5% decrease in the final grade for the course.
  5. **Late or Missed Assignments and Assessments Policy:** See current DPT Student Handbook “Written Examination Policy”. Additional course-specific policy is as follows:
    - All assignment will have a date and time as deadline.
    - Students need to submit their assignment via Blackboard before the deadline.
    - It will be a 5% decrease in the final grade per hour (01-59 minutes) after the deadline.
  6. **Skills Check Policy:** not applicable
  7. **Practical Exam Policy:** not applicable
  8. **Copyright Statement for Course Materials**
    - All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.
  9. **Making Changes to Schedules for Examinations (not quizzes)**
    - From the first day of the semester, the cohort has 14 calendar days to request a change in scheduled examination date based ONLY on conflicts with scheduled examinations in other classes. The request will be submitted to all responsible faculty members in writing. This request will include potential alternatives. The faculty will evaluate these requests and make a final decision within 7 days of receipt. Otherwise, examinations will not be changed.
  10. **Student Course Evaluation:**
    - The expectation is that each student will complete the online course evaluations distributed by UTEP at the end of the semester.
    - 1% extra credit for course eval to your grade composition
    - See Student Handbook for instructions.
    - Student name and course must be on the screenshot to receive credit

Date	Topic	Instructor	Objectives
Week 1: Jan 22	Introduction	Reyes	1. Discuss the biological, physical, cognitive, psychological and social changes across the lifespan.
Week 2: Jan 29	Societal Determinants of Health	Singleton	2. Discuss the assessment and impact of social determinants of health across the lifespan.
Week 3: Feb 5	Bone and Joint Health  <b>Quiz 1</b>	Singleton	4. Discuss bone and joint health (osteoporosis, vertebral fractures, sarcopenia, OA) and evidence-supported physical therapy management across the lifespan.
Week 4: Feb 12	<b>Exam 1</b>		
Week 5: Feb 19	Health promotion: Fitness and wellness	Singleton	3. Discuss contemporary evidence-supported health promotion to include the role of physical therapy in fitness and wellness programs, health screening, and disease prevention across the lifespan.
Week 6: Feb 26	Health promotion: Disease prevention	Singleton	
Week 7: March 5	Overweight and Obesity	Reyes	5. Discuss the health impacts of obesity and the role of physical therapy in the management of obesity across the lifespan.
<b>Week 8: Spring Break</b>	<b>March 10-14</b>	<b>NO CLASS</b>	<b>NO CLASS</b>
Week 9: March 19	Physical Disabilities and complexities  <b>Quiz 2</b>	Reyes	6. Identify the complex challenges and the physical therapy management of individuals with physical disabilities including pediatric disorders, brain injury, and spinal cord injury as they age into adults/older adults.
Week 10: March 26	<b>Exam 2</b>		
Week 11: April 2	Geriatric Assessment	Singleton	7. Discuss interdisciplinary geriatric assessment and the roles individual disciplines play in conducting and interpreting a comprehensive geriatric assessment. Physical Therapy

			Geriatric assessment includes a) balance, b) physical function, d) posture, e) pain, f) cognition, g) mood, and h) nutrition.
<b>Week 12: April 9</b>	<b>Cognitive Changes</b>	<b>Reyes</b>	8. Discuss cognitive changes in older adults including depression, delirium and dementia and the appropriate physical therapy management of these changes.
<b>Week 13: April 16</b>	<b>Safety: Risks and Barriers</b>	<b>Reyes</b>	9. Identify specific risks and barriers to older adult safety including falls, malnutrition, frailty, elder mistreatment (including need to report to authorities), and other risks in community, home and care environments.
<b>Week 14: April 23</b>	<b>Living Facility and Case Management</b>	<b>Reyes</b>	10. Determine case management needs for older adults and their caregivers to include nursing facilities, sub-acute care facilities, assisted living facilities, home care, community resources, palliative care and hospice care through the analysis of patient presentation (cognitive, physical, functional) and family/community support systems.
<b>Week 15: April 30</b>	<b>Patient cases</b>  <b>Quiz 3</b>	<b>Singleton and Reyes</b>	11. Analyze complex simulated patient/client cases to establish the need for consultation or a referral to another health care professional. [This is Diagnostic Clinical Reasoning]  12. Synthesize complex simulated patient/client cases to develop evidence-supported and person-centered clinical therapeutic care plans. [This is Therapeutic Clinical Reasoning]

<b>Week 16:</b> <b>5/14/25</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>		
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