



Academic Term: Summer 2026

Course Syllabus

Course Title: PTA Clinical III

Course Dept. and Number: PTA 234

Credit Hours: 6

Length of Course: 7 Week

Didactic/Lab/Clinical (or Practicum) hours per Semester: 3/ 0/ 264

Time and Day of Class: Monday through Saturday as scheduled; June 29 – August 12, 2026

Summary Session: August 14, 12:00 – 12:50 p.m.

Format of Delivery: Face-to-Face

Instructor: Justin Helbing PTA, MA

E-mail: justing.helbing@mchs.edu

Phone # (Optional): (515) 643-6773; Google Voice number (515) 257-6243

Office location (as applicable): Building One, Room 303

Office hours: Mondays-Thursday 3 p.m.– 4 p.m., Fridays 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Expected response time: Faculty will respond to emails/phone messages within two business days. Grading of exams and assignments will be completed 1 week from the submission date. Canvas gradebook will be updated continually.

Course Description:

This course provides students with the opportunity to interact with physical therapy staff and other health care practitioners in a clinical setting and to continue development of clinical skills. Students will perform physical therapy data collection and interventions under the supervision of a licensed physical therapist and/or physical therapist assistant. Students will incorporate the core values of Mercy into their interactions with patients, families, and the healthcare team. This experience occurs off-campus.

Prerequisites:

PTA 201, PTA 202, PTA 204

Corequisites: PTA 230, PTA 232, PTA 235

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. Propose specific and appropriate goals for the clinical education experience.
2. Follow documentation and billing policies and procedures as outlined by the clinical facility.
3. Accurately document clinical encounters.
4. Describe emergency policies and procedures for a given facility and implement when necessary.
5. Display sensitivity to cultural differences during provision of physical therapy services.
6. Display sensitivity to individual differences during the provision of physical therapy services.
7. Display effective communication with patients, physical therapy personnel, and other health care professionals.
8. Identify strategies to support the patient's participation in physical therapy.
9. Report information to supervising physical therapist to assist in the achievement of patient/client goals.
10. Demonstrate safe body mechanics during all aspects of physical therapy practice.
11. Perform data collection techniques prior to and following interventions with a variety of patients.
12. Recognize need for adjustments during intervention based on subjective and objective findings.
13. Report safety concerns to the supervising physical therapist.
14. Perform physical therapy interventions as outlined in the established plan of care.
15. Apply physical therapy modalities as outlined in the established plan of care.
16. Assist patients with donning/doffing a prosthetic or orthotic.
17. Utilize isolation techniques during physical therapy interventions as stated in the care plan.
18. Utilize sterile technique during physical therapy interventions as stated in the care plan.
19. Inform supervising physical therapist regarding the patient/caregiver's ability to care for an assistive, adaptive, orthotic, protective, supportive, or prosthetic device.
20. Describe the activity, position, or posture that relieves the condition.
21. Describe the activity, position, or posture that aggravates the condition.
22. Report adjustments of interventions within the plan of care to the supervising physical therapist.
23. Report changes in status to supervising physical therapist prior to initiating interventions when appropriate.
24. Effectively seek clarification from the supervising physical therapist for a given situation.
25. Effectively report changes in patient status to supervising physical therapist.
26. Report relevant patient data for discharge planning to the supervising physical therapist.
27. Select the most appropriate method(s) of instruction for a given patient situation.
28. Select the most appropriate method(s) of instruction for a presentation to clinicians.
29. Explain the role of the PTA to patient/caregiver using appropriate level of language.
30. Modify schedule to meet the needs of patient/client.
31. Display legal, ethical, and safe behaviors in the practice of physical therapy.
32. Display professional behaviors as outlined in the Standards of Ethical Conduct for the PTA, the Generic Abilities, and Mercy College's core values.
33. Accept responsibility for one's own learning.
34. Value constructive feedback from faculty and peers.
35. Display time management and resource utilization strategies to enhance learning.

Required Textbooks and other required material:

PTA Program Student Handbook
 Clinical Site Contact Information form
 Copies of evaluation forms
 Curriculum textbooks and notes

Evaluation Methods:

This course is graded on a pass/not pass basis. In order to earn a passing grade for this course, the student must:

- 1) submit the Student Information Form with a cover letter to the SCCE at the assigned facility and provide copies to the ACCE at least one month prior to the start of the clinical experience
- 2) submit the Clinical Site Contact Information form to the ACCE within two (2) business days of start date
- 3) submit the Clinical Education Weekly Planning forms by the following Monday at noon
- 4) submit the Clinical Performance Instrument form and Generic Abilities form (self-assessment), PTA Student Assessment of the Clinical Experience form, PTA Student Assessment of the Clinical Instructor form, and copy of thank you note to the clinical instructor and/or department to the ACCE by **August 14 at noon**
- 5) present an in-service to clinical education faculty and staff; score “meets expectations” on grading rubric
- 6) demonstrate progress in all skills practiced
- 7) score entry-level on every performance criterion on the Clinical Performance Instrument AND 100% of the generic abilities behaviors at entry-level at final evaluation.

If a submission deadline is missed, an additional project is assigned to meet course expectations. The content of the project is at the discretion of the instructor.

Evaluation methods are subject to change per the Program Chair. The American with Disabilities Act Accommodations Policy link is found under College-wide Policies.

The following grading scale will be used:

See above description.

Grades are posted on Canvas to assist students in keeping track of their academic progress. Canvas grade calculations show a student's approximate current status, but this grade may or may not reflect the student's actual overall final grade. This may be due to the weight given to different assignment categories, complex grading formulas, and rounding differences. Final grades are posted in MyMercy. Contact instructor for any additional questions.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is mandatory during all clinical education experiences. There are no unexcused absences. Excused absences (illness, injury and family emergencies) will be made up at the discretion of the clinical instructor, the SCCE and the ACCE. In the event you must be absent, please notify the clinical instructor at the designated number and the Program's ACCE by email or calling 515-257-6243 at least one half (½) hour prior to the start of your shift.

Make-Up Policy:

Attendance is mandatory during all clinical education experiences. Refer to attendance policy.

Late work Policy:

Late work is not accepted.

Student Expectations:

Refer to the PTA Program Handbook and Class Covenant for student expectations.

Course Expectations:

The student is expected to have read and understood the information contained in this syllabus and comply with the requirements as set forth herein. The syllabus, however, is not a contract between the department and its students and the information contained in this syllabus is subject to change at any time with notice to the student.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Mercy College of Health Sciences complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act, and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. To request accommodations, students with disabilities must register with the Student Success Center (SSC) located in the Josephine Norkaitis Student Success Center-ACE building. Mercy College faculty are not obligated to provide accommodations for students with disabilities without proper notification from the SSC and the student. Students may initiate the accommodation process at any time. However, accommodations are not retroactive, and the registration process takes time. Therefore, the SSC recommends that students initiate the process as soon as possible rather than wait for academic responsibilities to become extra stressful and overwhelming. Contact the Dean of Student Affairs, 181 Josephine Norkaitis Student Success Center-ACE building, at (515)-643-6659 for more information.

College-wide Policies:

The student is expected to have read and understood the information contained in this syllabus and comply with the requirements as set forth herein. <http://www.mchs.edu/syllabuslinks>

The following policies include:

- Academic Integrity Policy.
- Accessibility Statement.
- Adverse weather.
- Attendance.
- Campus Resources.
- Cell phone policy.
- Grievance & Student Academic Complaint Procedure.
- Incomplete grade.
- Plagiarism.
- Student Code of Conduct Policy.
- Withdrawal from a course.

Class Session Schedule for the Course:

Individual schedules are developed in consultation with the clinical instructor. Students are expected to follow the schedule of the assigned clinical instructor.

Instructional Procedures: Direct interactions with patients, physical therapy personnel, and other healthcare providers; self-assessment and planning

Faculty Roster: Various clinical education faculty members.

Justin Helbing PTA, MA
Director of Clinical Education
Clinical Instructor
Mercy College of Health Sciences