



# ACADEMY ROUNDUP

The Official Newsletter for the APTA Academy of Education

A source of news, announcements, and upcoming events for physical therapy educators.

## Newsletter Highlights

### Announcements:

- Advocacy Update:  
Dept of Education RISE Committee Examines Definition of Professional Degrees
- Foundation for Physical Therapy Research - Doctoral Studies Scholarships are Open!
- Call for EEC Program Director | Deadline **Nov 21**
- Academy Leadership Nominations **Extended to November 30!** *\*New Secretary Position Added*
- Webinars
  - RFE SIG Journal Club:  
Outcomes of Residency Education: Insights into the Professional Formation of the Physical Therapist Resident | **Dec 9**
- CSM 2026
  - Call for CSM Moderators
  - ***Register for a Pre-Conference!***
- FHEL Applications Open From October 1 - March 1
- SIG Spotlight
  - PTA Educators SIG

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Advocacy Update:**  
**Dept of Education RISE Committee Examines  
Definition of Professional Degrees**

The Department of Education's Reimagining and Improving Student Education (RISE) Committee adopted a narrow definition for what constitutes a "professional degree," and did not include the DPT on its list. If this definition is adopted, students pursuing degrees that are not considered "professional degrees" would have borrowing for federal student loans limited to \$20,500/year and would have a \$100,000 lifetime cap. More information can be found in the [Information Bulletin](#).

[Learn More](#)

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## 2026 Promotion of Doctoral Studies Scholarships Applications are Open!



In 2026, the APTA Academy of Education is supporting an award available to pre-candidate doctoral students (\$7,500) or doctoral candidates (\$15,000). Applicants must be members of both APTA and the Academy at the time the application is submitted.

Doctoral students and candidates who are focused on PT education research are not limited to this award. They may apply and be eligible for non-restricted awards, too.

### Key Dates:

- **Application deadline:** January 20, 2026, 4:59 p.m. ET
- **Award announcements:** Late June 2026
- **Scholarship start date:** September 1, 2026

For eligibility details, guidelines, and instructions, visit the [Foundation's website](#). To receive updates and FAQs, [join the scholarship email list](#).

[Learn More and Apply](#)

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## Call for Program Director: Excellence in Education Certificate Program



## EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

The APTA Academy of Education is seeking an experienced and visionary educator to guide the transition of its Excellence in Education Certificate (EEC) program from development to sustainable implementation. The program director will provide leadership in operationalizing the program structure, refining content and mentoring processes, and ensuring academic integrity, learner engagement, and scalability as the program evolves.

### About the Program

The Excellence in Education Certificate program supports the professional growth of current and aspiring educators, including clinicians interested in or transitioning to academic roles. This program enhances an understanding of the academic environment through participant mentorship and the development of a solid foundation in learning sciences and educational methodologies. Empowered with essential knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources, participants will contribute meaningfully to educational programs.

The Excellence in Education Certificate (EEC) program will employ a blended learning model, delivering content through asynchronous and synchronous modules to meet the growing demand of developing future and current educators across the many realms of physical therapy education including clinical, academic, and residency/fellowship arenas. A critical core of content modules is linked simultaneously to traditional CEU requirements and professional licensing needs. The program will require a minimum of 60 total contact hours, a certificate examination, and 10 hours of direct mentoring by experts in the field. Formative assessments will be utilized at the end of each content module, linked to CEU credits, followed by a summative examination to earn the certificate. To accommodate aspiring candidates, mentored synchronous activities will be scheduled primarily, but not exclusively, during evenings or on weekends.

### Call for Program Director

**The APTA Academy of Education Board of Directors is accepting applications now through November 21, 2025** for a program director for its Excellence in Education certificate program.

The program director would be expected to provide strategic leadership for the following activities:

### Program Leadership and Strategic Oversight

- Guide the transition from consultant-led development to a fully operational, sustainable certificate program.
- Ensure ongoing refinement of program infrastructure, policies, and procedures for curriculum management, assessment, and quality assurance.
- Serve as the primary liaison between the EEC team, Academy staff/leadership, content developers, and mentors.
- Ensure all program elements align with APTA Academy of Education strategic

priorities and contemporary educational best practices.

### **Curriculum and Content Quality**

- Lead the culminating review, integration, and finalization of all Phase I modules, ensuring consistency and instructional quality.
- Implement peer review processes to maintain rigor and relevance.
- Oversee the development and integration of assessment strategies, including formative module assessments and the summative certificate exam.

### **Mentorship and Faculty Development**

- Develop and implement the mentoring framework for participants, including mentor recruitment, training, and matching processes.
- Support mentors in applying adult learning principles and reflective teaching practices.

### **Program Implementation and Evaluation**

- Oversee the pilot cohort, collect and analyze feedback, and guide iterative improvements.
- Develop a plan for continuous quality improvement, including data tracking and outcome metrics.
- Collaborate with Academy staff on marketing, communication, and participant engagement strategies.

### **Reporting and Communication**

- Provide regular written and verbal updates to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, including progress summaries, key decisions, and recommendations.
- Communicate timelines, deliverables, and progress benchmarks to all stakeholders.

The program director will begin January 5, 2026 and serve through December 31, 2026, with an option for renewal based on program needs and mutual agreement.

Compensation: Commensurate with experience, up to \$10,000 for initial contract period, with renewal potential based on scope and deliverables.

### **Required Experience and Qualifications**

- Doctoral degree (DPT, PhD, EdD) in Physical Therapy, Education, or related field.
- Demonstrated leadership in program development, curriculum design, or continuing education initiatives.
- Proven experience mentoring educators or clinicians in academic or professional development settings.
- Familiarity with CEU/continuing professional development standards and online learning platforms.
- Strong organizational, communication, and project management skills.
- Prior experience with APTA Academy of Education programs or initiatives preferred.

This position offers a unique opportunity to shape an Academy of Education-endorsed professional development program that advances teaching excellence across all domains of physical therapy education. Interested applicants should submit a CV and letter of interest highlighting leadership experience, educational expertise, and a vision for developing the next generation of educators.

## Academy Leadership Nominations Extended to November 30!



The APTA Academy of Education is looking for energetic and dynamic members to serve the Academy in leadership positions. All terms are for three years, unless otherwise noted, and begin July 1, 2026.

Position descriptions can be found in the **Academy Policies and Procedures section of the website**.

**The deadline for nominations is November 30, 2025.** To self-nominate, please [click here](#). To nominate a qualified member of the Academy, please submit the name and email address of the nominee to the Nominating Committee Chair (Tara Haj, [chair-nominations@aptaeducation.org](mailto:chair-nominations@aptaeducation.org)). Elections will be held in the Spring of 2026.

Only members who meet the following criteria AND consent to serve shall be eligible for election to office:

- Be a member of the Academy as provided for in the Association bylaws for a period of at least one year immediately preceding the nomination deadline.
- Be a member of the SIG for a period of at least one year immediately preceding the nomination deadline.
- Candidates for Chair or Co/Vice Chair must have been continuous members in good standing of the Academy for a period of at least two years immediately preceding the nomination deadline.

No candidate may be considered for two positions simultaneously.

**Please note: The Academy recently added the Secretary position to this call.**

Per Academy policy, the nominating committees, after review of all submitted candidate materials, shall select no more than three (3) nominees for each open position.

### ***Open Positions***

#### **Academy Positions:**

- President-Elect
- **Secretary \*\*NEW\*\***
- Nominating Committee Member

### ***SIG Positions***

- **Academic Faculty SIG**

- Chair
  - Member Engagement Secretary
  - Nominating Committee Member
- **Anatomy Educators SIG**
    - Vice Chair
    - Membership Secretary
    - Nominating Committee Member
- **Clinical Education SIG**
    - Clinical Co-Chair
    - Recording Secretary
    - Nominating Committee Member
- **Interprofessional Education and Practice SIG**
    - Vice Chair
    - Communications Committee Chair
    - Nominating Committee Member
- **PTA Educators SIG**
    - Recording Secretary
    - Nominating Committee Member
- **Residency and Fellowship Education SIG**
    - Vice Chair
    - Nominating Committee Member
- **Scholarship of Education SIG**
    - Chair

**Submit  
Nomination**







## Outcomes of Residency Education: Insights into the Professional Formation of the Physical Therapist Resident

Tuesday | December 9 | 8-9 PM ET

This RFESIG Academy of Education Journal Club is a live, interactive session. Open to RFESIG members and the broader community, this session offers opportunities for knowledge sharing, professional development, and reflection on residency best practices. CEUs available upon completion of assessment.

**Discussion led by:** *Julie Peterson*

.1 CEUs

Free for Academy of Education members

\$25 for non-members

[Register](#)



## Join us for the 51st Annual APTA CSM February 12th - 14th in Anaheim, California

This year, we're on a mission to excellence, pushing boundaries, and expanding horizons in physical therapy. Be a part of the largest physical therapy conference in the nation! Connect with thousands of PTs, PTAs, and students, and explore programming and events you won't find anywhere else.

[Register](#)

## Academy Preconference Workshops

Discover how to start your research journey, harness AI in the classroom and clinic, or supplement shrinking department budgets with effective fundraising at one of the

### **Education Research: How to Begin Your Journey (Mini-GAMER) .8 CEUs**

Ready to turn your curiosity into research that advances physical therapy education? This full-day mentored workshop gives novice researchers the structure and confidence to move from idea to action. Learn to frame meaningful research questions, select sound methods, and map a clear plan under expert guidance. Join us to build the skills and network that launch your scholarship journey—and leave with a concrete research roadmap.

[Learn More](#)

### **AI in Physical Therapy: A New Era of Education and Practice (.9 CEUs)**

Artificial Intelligence is transforming every corner of health care—don't get left behind. This immersive preconference course demystifies AI and gives you hands-on practice with tools that elevate teaching, learning, and clinical reasoning. Explore real-world applications, tackle ethical and academic integrity challenges, and design AI-enhanced curricula or research ideas with peers. Take part and shape how AI advances physical therapy education and practice.

[Learn More](#)

### **Growing Philanthropic Support for Your Program: Developing a Strategic Roadmap for Success .8 CEUs**

Strengthen your program's future by mastering the art of academic fundraising. This interactive seminar equips leaders and faculty to secure external support through strategic partnerships and compelling proposals. Learn how to align goals with donor priorities, craft high-impact funding plans, and engage stakeholders for lasting success. Build your roadmap to sustainable growth—and position your program for long-term advancement.

[Learn More](#)

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## **Moderate a CSM Education or Platform Session!**



Help make the Academy's CSM education and platform sessions a success by volunteering as a moderator!

**To participate, you must be registered for CSM.**

#### **Responsibilities include:**

- Arrive 15 minutes prior to the session
- For platforms, ask them to load their presentation to the provided laptop
- Welcome the participants and give the title of the session
- For platforms, keep time and signal to speaker when time is running out
- Assist with questions per the speakers' request
- Ensure the session ends on time



We thank you for considering how you might be able to help. Please sign up by Thursday, January 29.

[Sign Up](#)

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## FHEL Applications Open October 1 - March 1



### Fellowship for Higher Education Leadership Accepting Applications for 26-27 Cohort

Registration is now open for the Fellowship of Higher Education Leadership, a program designed for current and aspiring directors and leaders in physical therapy education to enhance leadership skills, connect theory and practice and access mentorship from experienced PT education academic leaders. The 13-month program combines asynchronous modules created by content experts, interactive live office hours and three immersive sessions to prepare PT and PTA faculty for leadership positions.

[Learn More](#)

[Apply](#)

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## SIG SPOTLIGHT

### PTA Educators SIG



The PTA Educators SIG serves as the advocate and expert resource for the education and role of the PTA. Members provide leadership, mentorship and expertise in teaching and learning to support all persons concerned with education that ensures PTAs are prepared for contemporary practice.

#### Learning Objectives:

- Provide means to increase and improve communication among physical therapist assistant educators.
- Facilitate and increase opportunities for PTA faculty development and mentoring.
- Facilitate and improve mentoring opportunities for all persons involved in the education of physical therapist assistants.
- Advocate for the role of the PTA as the extender of care for the physical therapist within the profession of physical therapy.
- Promote existing and create additional opportunities for PTA Educator representation in leadership roles at the national level.
- Communicate and collaborate with physical therapist program educators.
- Create and promote ways for the PTAE SIG to impact the APTA Academy of

Education's participation and responses to issues related (but not limited) to the education, scope of work, supervision and direction of the PTA at the national level.

- Serve as a resource body with any/all inquiries related to the education and/or utilization of the physical therapist assistant.

*Leadership:*

Chair: [Jordan Tucker, PT, DPT, EdD](#)

Vice Chair: [Deanne Yates, PTA, PhD](#)

Recording Secretary: [Angela Lippiello, PTA](#)

Membership Secretary: [Amanda Heilman, PTA, MHS](#)

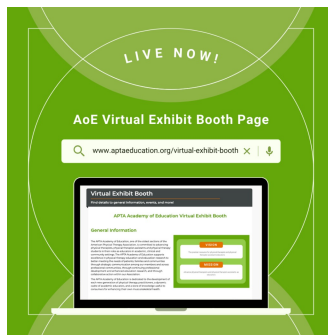
Nominating Committee Chair: [Carolyn Shishler, PT, MEd](#)

Nominating Committee: [Beverly Labosky, PTA](#)

Webinar Chair: [Michele Valencia, PT, DPT](#)

The Academy of Education **Thanks You!**

## QUICK CLICKS



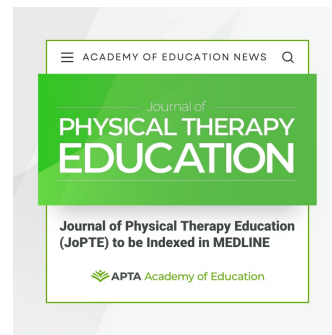
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Journal of Physical  
Therapy Education to be  
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