



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:

- Federal Affairs Liason | October Update
- ELC | Thank You For Attending / Save The Date
- Webinars
 - JoPTE Journal Club - ***This Thursday! Nov 6:*** Noncognitive Factors of Grit and Mindset and the Impact on Performance on the National Physical Therapy Exam
 - Admissions Network Event:
Wednesday, Nov 12
- FHEL Applications Open From October 1 - March 1
- CSM 2026 **Early Bird Registration Ends Today!**
 - Call for CSM Moderators
- SIG Spotlight
 - Clinical Education SIG

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Federal Affairs Liason: October Update

Government Shutdown and Appropriations: The federal government shutdown has reached its fourth week, with no deal in sight. Key pressure points include the first missed paychecks for air traffic controllers, the expiration of SNAP benefits for over 41 million Americans, and the start of ACA Marketplace open enrollment with rising premiums. A new continuing resolution (CR) will be needed before the current one expires on November 21, and it's unclear whether Congress will pass a short- or

long-term measure.

Education Department Workforce Reductions and IDEA Programs:

- The reductions in force (RIF) within the Department of Education so far has eliminated more than half the positions at the Department, including nearly all positions in the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). This has created significant disruption in administering the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs, leaving states uncertain about continued implementation and compliance. Federal funding currently covers around 14.7% of funds, far below the 40% commitment made when the law was enacted, creating a shortfall estimated at \$24-38 billion for the 2024-2025 school year. Funding for FY2024 and 2025 were maintained through a CR, but future funding is uncertain.
- On September 22, 2025, APTA joined in a letter drafted by the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA) and the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) urging the Secretary of the Department of Education to maintain all current grants under Part D of IDEA.
- On October 22, 2025, APTA joined with over 400 provider and patient groups in a joint statement expressing opposition to the U.S. Department of Education's recent RIF. These actions have conflict with specific requirements under IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act.
- On October 23, 2025, APTA joined with over 60 patient and provider organizations in a letter to the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP) with a request that the committee conduct an oversight hearing on the RIF actions of the Department of Education.

Federal Student Loan Caps:

- The Department of Education's Reimagining and Improving Student Education (RISE) Committee has begun discussions surrounding the definition of a "professional degree" versus "graduate degree" as it relates to federal student loan borrowing caps. Under current federal statute, only a limited number of degree programs - such as medicine and dentistry - are explicitly designated as professional degrees. Many others, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology, are not explicitly listed in statute. However, the statute allows the Department to recognize additional degree programs not explicitly listed.
 - Although physical therapy is not explicitly named in federal statute, it has historically been treated as a professional degree. The current rulemaking process will determine whether any degrees - if any - should be formally added to the professional degree category through rulemaking by the Department. If the Doctor of Physical Therapy degree is recognized as a professional degree, students may borrow up to \$50,000 annually, with a lifetime cap of \$200,000. If not, borrowing is limited to \$20,500 per year, with a lifetime cap of \$100,000.
 - APTA is collaborating with other affected health care provider groups and coalitions, including the Federation of Associations of Schools of the Health Professions (FASHP). As part of the rulemaking process, APTA recently submitted formal comments to the Department of Education advocating for the recognition of physical therapy as a professional degree. APTA also joined a health care provider coalition letter to the Department, while FASHP submitted an additional comment letter requesting a meeting with Department staff.
 - The committee's next session is scheduled for November 3-7, 2025. The negotiated rulemaking process is expected to result in
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Thank You For Attending ELC 2025!



To access your continuing education certificate, please follow the instructions below:

1. Login to the APTA Learning Center - <http://learningcenter.apta.org>.
2. If you do not know your login information, please contact member services at [800-999-2782](tel:800-999-2782) or MemberServices@apta.org. Typically, your user ID will be your APTA memberID or email address. If you do not remember your password, please use the Forgot Password link.
3. From the left-hand menu, click on Dashboard. If you have multiple pages of courses, please navigate to the last page(s) to locate the conference.
4. Click on "**Education Leadership Conference (ELC) - 2025 to complete the evaluation survey**".
5. After successfully completing the evaluation, you may download your certificate by clicking on "**Claim Contact Hours**."

Questions can be directed to the Learning Center at 800.999.2782 or MemberServices@apta.org.

ELC 2026: Save The Date

The primary goal of the annual ELC conference is to foster excitement, education, and invigorating discussions among all stakeholders invested in physical therapy education.

Add your name to the [interest form](#) to stay up to date with the latest information on ELC 2026.



2026

21st Annual Physical
Therapy Education
Leadership Conference

October 16 - 18

Marriott Marquis | Washington, D.C.

Co-hosted by the American Council of
Academic Physical Therapy (ACAPT) and the
APTA Academy of Education (AoE)





— Journal of —
**PHYSICAL THERAPY
EDUCATION**

Noncognitive Factors of Grit and Mindset and the Impact on Performance on the National Physical Therapy Exam

Thursday | November 6 | 4-5pm ET

This is a webinar which will include a presentation by authors of a research investigation published in the Journal of PT Education. This will be followed by guided discussion in small groups, regarding relevant points of the content presented. Each group will have a facilitator who will be using discussion prompts to assist with integration and application of the presented content. There will be a return to the larger group setting in order to share insights and have further author guidance about the discussion and application information.

Required reading materials:

Huebner, Bethany PT, DPT, PhD; Mattocks, Alma PhD, ATC; Pitt, Jason PhD.
Noncognitive Factors of Grit and Mindset Do Not Predict Performance on the
National Physical Therapy Exam. Journal of Physical Therapy Education 37(2):p
138-144, June 2023. | DOI: 10.1097/JTE.0000000000000268

Presenters:



Alma Mattocks

Dr Mattocks' doctoral degree is in Health Professions Education. She is an associate professor and serves as Chairperson and Program Director of Athletic Training at West Virginia University. She brings a wealth of experience having been a clinician and educator for 20 years.

Bethany Huebner

Dr. Bethany Heubner's doctoral degree is in Health Professions Education and is a Board Certified Specialist in Sports Physical Therapy. She is an Associate Professor and currently serves as Department Chair, DPT Program Director within the School of Physical Therapy and Health Professions Education at University of Evansville. As a core faculty member she teaches in the areas of musculoskeletal management, clinical and professional issues, and clinical education. She also serves as a Clinical Content Expert for the ABPTS Sports Specialty Exam.

[Register](#)

Admissions Network Event:

Wednesday | November 12 | 7- 8:30pm ET

The Admissions Network in the Academic Faculty SIG of the APTA Academy of Education is planning their next virtual event “**Empowering the Applicant: Fostering Transparency in the Admissions Process.**”

This event will be an open dialogue to share ideas about providing future applicants with information about DPT and PTA programs: strategies, successes, and challenges.

[RSVP](#)

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](#)

CSM Early Bird Registration Ends TODAY!



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 Academy of Education's Preconference Sessions:

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](#)

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:

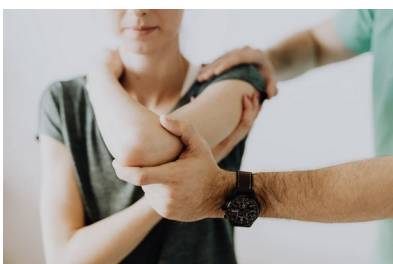
- Arrive 15 minutes prior to the session
- For platforms, ask them to load their presentation to the provided laptop
- Welcome the participants and give the title of the session
- For platforms, keep time and signal to speaker when time is running out
- Assist with questions per the speakers' request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

SIG SPOTLIGHT

Clinical Education SIG



The Clinical Education SIG shall serve as a resource and forum for individuals who have professional concerns for the coordination, implementation, and evaluation of clinical education for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants. Both academic and clinical faculty are welcome!

Learning Objectives:

- To provide a vehicle for increasing and improving communication among

clinical educators.

- To increase the participation of clinical educators in the APTA Academy of Education.
- To provide continuing education in areas pertinent to clinical evaluation and teaching.
- To foster problem solving in clinical education using the scientific method.
- To promote cooperative efforts among educational programs and clinical sites in scheduling, evaluation, and continuing education.
- To develop guidelines for the continuing development and evaluation of academic and clinical faculty involved in clinical education.
- To serve as a resource body involved in acquiring, cataloguing, and disseminating information relating to clinical education in physical therapy.

Leadership:

Clinical Co-Chair: [Julie Gruden, PT](#)

Academic Co-Chair: [Elsa Drevyn, PT, DPT](#)

Membership Secretary: [Ryan Pontiff, PT, DPT, PhD](#)

Recording Secretary: [KeithAnn Halle, PT, DPT, CBIS](#)

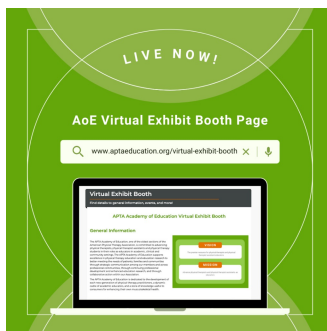
SIG Nominating Committee Chair: [Julie Lombardi, PT, DPT, CBIS, NCS](#)

SIG Nominating Committee Member: [Derrick F. Campbell, PT, DPT, DSc, cert MDT, OCS](#)

SIG Nominating Committee Member: [Amanda Piccoli, PT, DPT, AIB-VRC](#)

The Academy of Education **Thanks You!**

QUICK CLICKS



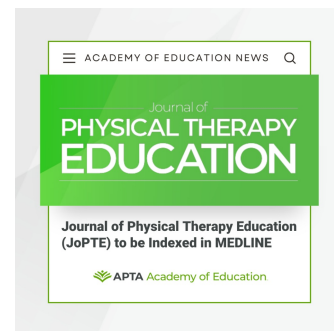
Check out our
Virtual Exhibit Booth!

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Participate in your
Colleagues' Research

[Learn More](#)



Journal of Physical
Therapy Education to be
Indexed in MEDLINE

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CURRENT LITERATURE

Check out the latest information and trends in physical therapy educational research on the JoPTE website and follow @JOPTEjournal on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to keep up with newsworthy educational content and publications!

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