



# 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:

- Take Action: Protect Federal Loan Access for Physical Therapy Students
- Physical Therapy Faculty Development Workshop (PTFDW) 2026: *Registration Open!*
- FHEL Grants for PTA Educators
- Simulation Networking Community Launches Monthly Chats - *Tomorrow- Feb 5th*
- FHEL Applications Open From **October 1 - March 1**
- **CSM 2026**
- Academy Networking Events
- CSM PTA Town Hall
- SOESIG Education Research Consulting Session
- Call for JoPTE Journal Club Committee Members!
- **New!** The Journal of Physical Therapy Education (JoPTE) Editorial Fellowship
- CESIG Education Impact Initiative
- Stronger Together: Building Collaborative Research in PT Education: *Virtual Workshop*
- PTA Honor Society Nominations Now Open! Nominate Early
- Spotlight- Melissa Yeung, Ph.D - *JoPTE Editorial Fellowship Experience*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Take Action: Protect Federal Loan Access for Physical Therapy Students**



On January 29, 2026, the U.S. Department of Education released a proposed rule that includes a new definition that, if enacted, would reclassify dozens of professional degree programs (including physical therapy) as “graduate degree programs” for the purposes of federal student loan borrowing limits.

Under this proposal, “graduate degree programs” would have an annual borrowing limit of \$20,500 and a lifetime cap of \$100,000. In contrast, programs designated as “professional degree programs” would continue to have a \$50,000 annual limit and a \$200,000 total cap. As a result, future physical therapy students would face significantly lower federal student loan limits.

While APTA supports efforts to reduce the cost of education, this arbitrary proposal, contrary to congressional intent, would create new barriers for prospective students and negatively affect the health care workforce at a time of nationwide shortages.

The proposed rule is within a 30-day comment period after which the Department will potentially enact a finalized rule. [Comment on the rule here.](#)

In the meantime, Congress has begun pushing back on the Department’s approach. Notably, H.R. 6718 and H.R. 6574 have been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives to ensure that professional degree programs, including physical therapy, remain classified as “professional degree programs” rather than being treated as “graduate degree programs.”

Please take a few minutes to send an email to your representative urging them to support these two pieces of legislation.

To take action, [click here](#), or press the button below and scroll down to “[Take Action: Protect Federal Loan Access for Physical Therapy Students](#)” to input your information and send a letter to your representative.

[Take Action Now](#)

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## Physical Therapy Faculty Development Workshop (PTFDW) Register for Online Workshop by February 16

**New to DPT or PTA faculty roles? *You don’t have to figure it out alone.***

The APTA Academy of Education is offering two New Faculty Development Workshops this year designed specifically for early-career faculty. These interactive sessions bring new faculty together with experienced faculty facilitators to explore real-world topics including navigating faculty roles and responsibilities, implementing evidence-informed instructional and assessment strategies, and maintaining a sustainable work-life balance.

You'll leave with practical tools, fresh ideas, and a growing professional network—plus post-workshop networking sessions to keep the conversation (and support) going long after the workshop ends.

 **APTA Academy of Education.**

# 2026 Physical Therapy Faculty Development Workshop

The Academy is excited to offer two versions of the workshop this year: virtual in March and in-person in July.

## Virtual

March 2-5  
Zoom



## In-person

July 30 - August 1  
Chicago, IL



### Workshop Goals:

1. Introduce novice faculty to established roles in the academy.
2. Facilitate professional growth of developing faculty members.
3. Cultivate a network of academic colleagues among workshop participants and facilitators.
4. Create a professional development plan incorporating elements of teaching, scholarship and service.
5. Design instructional activities and assessment methods that reflect contemporary best practices.
6. Examine the integration of cultural humility within the physical therapy curricula.

### Focused Learning Opportunities:

1. Discussions on balancing responsibilities of teaching, research and service as the new faculty member acclimates to a role in higher education.
2. Applying core principles of teaching and learning, using best practices in course development, student assessments, and student engagement.
3. Fostering professionalism and coaching.
4. Focusing on the unique role of the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) as a member of the faculty team.

5. Individual or small group consulting opportunities with faculty facilitators during the workshop.
6. Post course synchronous networking and follow-up for participants.

Chicago Registration

Virtual Registration

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## Two FHEL Scholarships Available to PTA Educators

Any PTA educator (either PT or PTA) who submits their application to FHEL by March 1, 2026 will be automatically considered for this scholarship. Two scholarships to cover tuition to the FHEL will be awarded.

This scholarship will cover the cost of tuition only for FHEL and the recipient will be responsible for covering the cost of travel and course materials.

Criteria for Eligibility for the PTA Educators FHEL Grant:

- Being a current PTA educator (either academic or clinical)
- Being a current Academy of Education and PTAE SIG Member Agree to follow-up their FHEL experience with PTA-focused scholarship (exact type can be discussed with the chair of the PTAE SIG and can be decided on an individual basis)
- Willing to cover costs of travel and course materials to FHEL

Scholarship recipients will be decided based on the following criteria:

- Number of years in PTA education
- Needs-based following a review of the submitted institutional financial responsibly paperwork
- Responses to essay questions submitted as part of the FHEL process

No additional paperwork is required to be submitted. All fully completed PTA educator FHEL applications will be reviewed for this grant.

Any questions can be directed to the chair of the PTA Educators SIG at Chair-[PTAESIG@aptaeducation.org](mailto:PTAESIG@aptaeducation.org)

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## Simulation Networking Community Launches Monthly Chats

We are pleased to share the launch of SimChats! This monthly meeting is a dedicated space for AoE members with interest in simulation to connect, exchange ideas, and collaborate on best practices. Each session highlights current topics in simulation-based education, offers opportunities for members to share experiences or challenges, and fosters meaningful discussion across diverse roles and settings. Whether you are new to simulation or a seasoned expert, this gathering provides a supportive environment to learn, network, and strengthen our collective impact on healthcare education and patient outcomes.

We will discuss tools for building simulation scenarios and share a new scenario builder that the Simulation Networking Community has been working on.

We will also have an open forum to discuss your questions and ideas related to simulation-based learning.

Please join SimChats at **SimChats Zoom** :  
Meeting ID: 947 3412 5901 Passcode: 751877

[SimChats Zoom](#)

*Upcoming Meetings:*

- **Thursday, February 5, noon EST**
- Thursday, March 5, noon EST
- Thursday, April 9, noon EDT
- Thursday, May 7, noon EDT

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## FHEL Applications CLOSE March 1 - Apply NOW



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

**APTA**  
Academy of Education  
A Component of the American  
Physical Therapy Association

Visit us  
**BOOTH 1559**

**APTA Combined  
Sections Meeting**  
Feb 12-14, 2026 / Anaheim, CA

**APTA**  
American  
Physical Therapy  
Association

## Academy of Education CSM Events

Network with your fellow PT and PTA educators at one of the Academy of Education's many events at CSM:

**SIG Meetings**

- Clinical Education SIG Meeting: February 12, 4 PM, ACC N Building, 257
- PTA Educators SIG Meeting: February 12, 4 PM, ACC N Building, 258 B
- Residency/Fellowship Education SIG, February 12, 4 PM, ACC N Building, 253 ABC
- Scholarship of Education SIG Research Consulting Session: February 12, 4 PM, Hilton, San Clemente
- Anatomy Educators SIG: February 13, 6 AM, ACC N Building, 262, ABC
- Academic Faculty SIG & Interprofessional Education and Practice SIG: February 13, 6 AM ACC N Building, 260 ABC

### Networking Meetings

- Higher Education Leaders Networking Session: February 12, 4 PM, ACC N Building, 260 ABC
- Admissions Network Meeting: February 13, 12 PM, Hilton, Mezzanine 5

### Academy Events & Meetings

- Cerasoli Lecture: The Energies of Education, R. Scott Ward, PT, PhD, FAPTA: February 13, 2 PM, ACC N Building, 154 + 158
- Membership Engagement and Annual Meeting: February 13, 5:30 PM, Marriott, Orange County Ballroom

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## CSM PTA Town Hall

Join us for the **PTA Town Hall on Thursday, February 12, 2026 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm at the Anaheim Convention Center, Main Building, Room 204 C** to network with your PTA Council Representative and receive important updates including:

- 2026 PTA Council Goals
- PTA Volunteering Opportunities
- APTA BOD Leadership Update

Whether you are in PTA or DPT education, come learn about PTA hot topics to take back to your program. ***As a head's up, the PTA Educators SIG will walk over to the PTA Town Hall as a group immediately after that SIG meeting concludes.*** Most importantly, full-sized candy bar prizes have been confirmed. You don't want to miss it!

Remember to search for "PTA Town Hall" in the conference app to add this important meeting to your CSM schedule. See you there!

Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Shannon Simpson, PTA, BA

Academy of Education PTA Council Representative

[ssimpson0015@gmail.com](mailto:ssimpson0015@gmail.com)

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**NEW! SOESIG Education Research  
Consulting Session at CSM**

**The SOE SIG is hosting our education research consulting session from 4:00-5:30pm on Thursday February 12 at CSM in Anaheim.**

This is a short term mentoring session. We will have consultants with experience in a variety of areas of educational research and you can use this time to meet with them and discuss your ideas, questions etc. The room will be set up in round tables and the consultants will have signs indicating areas of expertise. We are currently seeking both consultants and participants.

If you are interested in being a consultant please sign up here. You do not have to be an "expert" in your field, you simply need to have SOME experience with conducting and presenting/publishing educational research.

If you are a researcher looking for guidance, advice, or short term mentoring, please sign up here.

[Consultant Sign Up](#)

[Researcher Sign Up](#)

If you have any questions about the event, reach out to: SOESIG chair [Sarah Gilliland](#).  
*We hope to see you in Anaheim!!*

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## Call for JoPTE Journal Club Committee Members!



Join the JoPTE Journal Club Committee!

We are seeking an enthusiastic physical therapy educator to join the Journal of Physical Therapy Education (JoPTE) Journal Club Committee. Committee members play a key role in transforming current JoPTE scholarship into dynamic online learning experiences by identifying timely article topics, inviting authors to present, organizing engaging webinar sessions, developing high-quality continuing education content, and contributing to innovative ideas that elevate PT education.

PTAs are encouraged to apply.

The JoPTE Journal Club Committee Member helps plan, coordinate, market, and deliver up to three virtual journal club sessions per year. Committee members collaborate on article selection, speaker outreach, session design, and live facilitation tasks to ensure high-quality, engaging professional development for PT/PTA educators and clinicians.

Committee members may rotate through functional roles (e.g., session moderator, marketing coordinator, chair) based on availability, interest, and committee needs.

Time Commitment: 1-2 meetings per month typically during the day.

Term: 3-years beginning in July 2026

Interested applicants should submit a CV and a brief letter of interest. This is a great opportunity to collaborate with colleagues, expand your scholarly impact, and support excellence in physical therapy education.

Applications due April 15, 2026. Send to [Jonathan Duellman](#).

Questions?

Contact: [Jonathan Duellman](#)

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## The Journal of Physical Therapy Education (*JoPTE*) Editorial Fellowship

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Journal of

# PHYSICAL THERAPY EDUCATION

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The aim of the *JoPTE* Editorial Fellowship is to support education researchers and develop a cadre of peer reviewers and future Editorial Board members who bring diverse perspectives to the Journal.

### About

This 12-month editorial fellowship offers early career physical therapy faculty the opportunity to learn about peer review, editing, publication decisions, and serving on an Editorial Board. The fellowship will offer hands on, practical experience and mentorship where fellows will work with the team at *JoPTE* to learn about the process of education research publication as well as the roles of the Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board. Fellows will attend monthly virtual meetings with the *JoPTE* team and will be invited to attend the *JoPTE* Editorial Board meeting held at the Combined Sections Meeting in 2027. There are virtual options for attendance. Fellows responsibilities will include assisting with the management of submissions, proofreading, and completing at least 6 mentored peer reviews over the course of the 12 month fellowship. Fellows will work with the Editor-in-Chief on screening manuscripts for appropriateness, identifying reviewers and then work with seasoned Editorial Board members on making decisions based on reviews, ultimately seeing accepted manuscripts through the publication process. Mentees will have the opportunity to co-author an Editorial at the end of the program.

The fellowship will run from June 1, 2026 to May 31, 2027.

### Application Details

**Criteria:** Applicants must currently serve as physical therapy faculty members and need to meet the criteria to serve as a peer reviewer for *JoPTE*, having authored/coauthored at least 2 peer reviewed, published manuscripts. This fellowship experience will hopefully translate to increased success with article submission and publication and fellows may consider serving on an Editorial Board in the future.

If you are interested, please send your CV and a 500-word statement about why you would like to be an *JoPTE* Editorial mentee and your objectives for the program to

[JoPTEEditor@aptaeducation.org](mailto:JoPTEEditor@aptaeducation.org) Be sure to tell us about the diverse perspective you will bring to JoPTE.

Applications are due April 30, 2026, decisions will be rendered in May, and appointments will begin in June 2026. We will interview select applicants and appoint up to 2 fellows for 2026-2027.

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## CE SIG Education Impact Initiative: Application CCIP Scholarship



The CESIG has an Education Impact Initiative Award available for up to \$500 registration and associated costs for attendance at a Credential Clinical Instructor Program (CCIP) level 1 or level 2 course in 2026.

This could be an in-person or virtual course but must be attended in 2026. Please share this information with your clinicians.

**Deadline for the application is February 28.**

Apply!



## Stronger Together: Building Collaborative Research in PT Education

### *A Free Virtual Workshop Series for DPT and PTA Faculty*

Are you a DPT or PTA faculty member driven to explore the impact of teaching and learning practices, educational innovation, or student outcomes, but unsure how to turn your ideas into a research project? Do you have ideas you're eager to study, but need help finding the right team to make it happen?

Whether you're just beginning your research journey or looking to expand your scholarly reach, this is your opportunity to connect, create, and contribute. This workshop offers the support, structure, and collaboration you need to bring your vision to life. Don't miss out on the opportunity to connect and collaborate with like-minded colleagues to build something ***Stronger Together***.

We invite you to apply for ***Stronger Together: Building Collaborative Research in PT Education***, a **FREE** two-part **virtual** workshop series designed to empower physical therapy and physical therapy assistant educators with the tools, mentorship, and community needed to launch impactful research projects. Up to 20 participants will be accepted into the workshop.

This workshop builds on prior work from the ACAPT Clinical Reasoning Consortium, [Mini-GAMER](#), and [Tarleton State University, President's Excellence in Research Scholars \(PERS\) initiative](#), in collaboration with the Texas Alliance of Physical Therapist Assistant Educators (TAPTAE).

## Your Next Step Starts Here

- Collaborative research teams (3–5 members) matched by shared interests
- Expert guidance from the APTA Academy of Education's SOE SIG leadership team
- Structured support through 2026 to develop and implement a research project
- A clear roadmap for IRB submission, grant applications, and scholarly dissemination
- \$1,000 seed grant for teams who complete the workshop and submit final deliverables

## What to Expect

- Flexible, accessible opportunities to build research skills
- Mentorship in transforming educational questions into rigorous education research
- Cross-institutional collaborations to elevate PT education research

## Workshop Format:

The ***Stronger Together*** workshop series is delivered in **two virtual sessions**.

**Part 1:** Focuses on team formation, refining a researchable question, conducting a literature review, and outlining a conceptual framework.

**Part 2:** Guides teams in developing a detailed research proposal, preparing IRB-ready materials, and identifying funding opportunities.

Participants receive ongoing consultation and support through 2026 to help bring their projects to life.

### Part 1: June 5, 2026

- Focuses on team formation, refining a researchable question, conducting a literature review, and outlining a conceptual framework.

### Part 2: August 14, 2026

- Guides teams in developing a detailed research proposal, preparing IRB-ready materials, and identifying funding opportunities.
- Participants receive ongoing consultation and support through 2026 to help bring their projects to life.

## Application Deadline: February 20, 2026

Whether you're just starting out or looking to grow your research portfolio, this is your opportunity to connect, collaborate, and contribute to the future of physical therapy education.

Let's build something ***Stronger Together***.

Apply!

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**PTA Honor Society Nominations are Now Open  
Submit by March 1st**



The Phi Tau Alpha Honor Society recognizes physical therapist assistant students who have not only demonstrated high academic standards, but have embodied the core values of the physical therapy profession. Students meeting the requirements outlined below should contact their program faculty to determine the next steps for applying for possible induction into the honor society.

**Nominate Early!** Faculty may need to nominate before all final requirements/courses are completed in order to get certificates in time for graduation. May/June graduates should be nominated by March 1.

[Submit Your Nomination](#)

## SPOTLIGHT

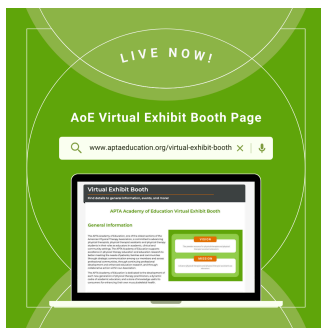
### JoPTE Editorial Fellow: Melissa Yeung, PhD

It has been a pleasure and honor to be the first Editorial Fellow for the Journal of Physical Therapy Education (JoPTE). The goal of the JoPTE Editorial Fellowship was to “support education researchers and develop a cadre of peer reviewers and future Editorial Board members who bring diverse perspectives to the Journal.” In the past six months, I had the opportunity to gain an insider’s perspective of, and form, a new appreciation for the editorial and publishing process. Additionally, I met with members of the JoPTE Editorial Board to discuss the opportunities and challenges of physical therapy education research and publication.

More importantly, I received mentorship in the research and publication process that is invaluable. The Fellowship provides hands-on mentoring from Dr. Keshrie Naidoo, JoPTE Editor in Chief, and members of the JoPTE Editorial Board. I received feedback on my manuscript reviewer, and mentorship on advancing my career and being a productive researcher. I’ve learned and adopted various strategies to improve my writing and maximize my productivity as a researcher. The JoPTE Editorial Fellowship is an experience that I will always be grateful for and recommend to those who are interested in learning more about the publication process.

*Melissa Yeung, Ph.D*

QUICK CLICKS



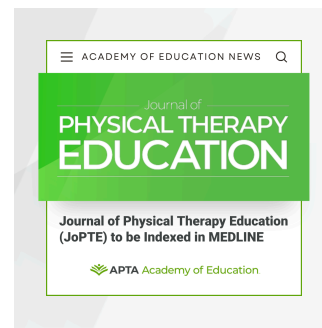
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Check out the latest information and trends in physical therapy educational research on the JoPTE website and follow @JOPTEjournal on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to keep up with newsworthy educational content and publications!

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