On April 25, 2023, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education made the following decision regarding the Physical Therapist Assistant education program at Polk State College.

**Status:** PROBATIONARY ACCREDITATION

**Action Taken:** Reaffirm Accreditation and Place the Program on Probation

**Effective Date:** April 25, 2023

**Information Used to Make Decisions:**
- Self-study Report
- Visit Report with Institution Response
- Comments from the Program Director
- Comments from the Team Leader
- Updated FSBPT report received from the program

**Reason for Decision:** The Commission based its decision to reaffirm accreditation and place the program on probation due to the program's inability to demonstrate compliance with the Standards and Required Elements.

The program has been placed on probation for being out of compliance for 18 months with one or more of the Standards and Required Elements identified in the Commission’s Findings section of this Summary of Action; specifically, the program has failed to document compliance with **1C2**. Since the US Department of Education requires accrediting agencies to take adverse action (withdrawal) when programs remain out of compliance for two years with any element, CAPTE is placing the program on probation as an indication that its accreditation is in jeopardy of being withdrawn at CAPTE’s next regularly scheduled meeting if the deficiencies are not corrected (unless the program makes a case that a good cause effort to come into compliance has been made).

The Commission’s decision was also based on the belief that the program will bring the areas of deficiency noted in the Summary of Action into compliance. That compliance must be appropriately documented in a Compliance Report which will be used by the Commission to determine compliance with the elements noted in the Findings and to monitor compliance with all the elements.

**Next Activity:** Compliance Report due **September 1, 2023**
NOTICES

NOTICE TO USDE, INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITING AGENCY AND STATE HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY
Pursuant to USDE regulation, a copy of this Summary of Action is being sent to the US Department of Education, the relevant institutional accrediting agency and the relevant state higher education authority at the same time as it is being sent to the program.

NOTIFICATION OF STUDENTS AND THE PUBLIC
It is the obligation of the institution to notify the students enrolled in the physical therapist [assistant] education program, those seeking admission and the public, that the program has been granted probationary accreditation until such time as probation is removed. A sample memorandum to students accompanies this Summary of Action. A copy of the actual memorandum sent by the program and a list of the individuals to whom it was sent must be provided to the Accreditation staff within thirty (30) days of receipt of this Summary of Action along with information about how the public is being notified.

REQUIRED STATEMENT OF PROBATIONARY STATUS
Once a program has been placed on probation, and for as long as it remains on probation, the program must use the statement provided in §8.20(a)(3) on all educational and promotional materials, including the institution/program web site, used by the program/institution.

[INSERT Name of Program] at [INSERT Name of Institution] is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: http://www.capteonline.org. The program’s current status is probationary accreditation; for more information see https://www.capteonline.org/about-capte/recent-actions-and-updates/recent-actions. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call [INSERT Direct Program Phone Number] or email [INSERT Direct Program Email Address].

CONTINGENCY PLAN
The program is advised to consider development of a contingency plan for students who are accepted into the next class. If the program is unable to address the issues identified in this Summary of Action and accreditation is withdrawn, and after all due process has been exhausted, the decision has not been reversed, only those students who are enrolled in the final year of the program will be considered graduates of an accredited program. Those students must successfully complete the program in the original time frame scheduled for their graduation, i.e., the twelve-month period following the date of the action to withdraw accreditation.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF REASONS FOR PROBATION
In accordance with USDE requirements, no later than sixty (60) days after the date of any decision to place or maintain a program on probation, CAPTE will publish on its web site a brief statement summarizing the reasons for the decision and the official comments, if any, that the program may make with regard to the decision. A copy of what we intend to publish is enclosed with this summary of action. Acknowledgement that the institution has reviewed the intended public notice must be received by the Accreditation staff no later than fourteen (14) days following receipt of the decision, along with the official comments from the program or institution in regard to the decision, if any. Notices related to programs on probation will be removed from the website when probation is no longer in effect.
TWO YEAR LIMITATION ON BEING OUT OF COMPLIANCE

CAPTE’s recognition by the United States Department of Education requires a limitation of two years for programs to be out of compliance with a required element [34 CFR 602.20(a)(2)(iii)]. When, after review of a Compliance Report, the program remains out of compliance with any required element and sufficient progress toward compliance has not been demonstrated, CAPTE may act to place the program on probationary accreditation or withdraw accreditation. CAPTE will place the program on probationary accreditation when a program remains out of compliance for 18 months. If the program continues to be out of compliance with any required element at the end of the two-year period following the initial finding that the program is out of compliance, CAPTE will withdraw accreditation unless CAPTE judges the program, for good cause, to be making significant efforts to come into compliance with the standards and required elements. CAPTE defines a good cause effort as:

(a) a completed comprehensive assessment of the problem/issue under review,
(b) an appropriate plan for achieving compliance within a reasonable time frame not to exceed two years,
(c) a detailed timeline for completion of the plan,
(d) evidence that the plan has been implemented according to the established timeline, and
(e) evidence that the implemented plan is showing results that provide reasonable assurance the program will achieve compliance within the allotted time frame.

It is the program’s responsibility to make the case that a good cause effort has been made and continues to be in effect. During the extension for good cause, probationary accreditation status will be maintained, and the program’s progress will be monitored. In no case, however, will an extension for good cause be longer than two years.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF REASONS FOR DECISIONS

Pursuant to expectations of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, CAPTE provides public notice of the reasons for its decisions to grant candidacy or grant or reaffirm accreditation. These notices are in addition to the notices of reasons for probation and for final adverse actions as required by the US Department of Education. The front page of this Summary of Action will be used for this purpose.

ACCURATE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF THIS DECISION BY THE INSTITUTION

The institution and program must make accurate public disclosure of the accreditation or pre-accreditation status awarded to the program. Further, the United States Department of Education (USDE) requires all recognized accrediting agencies to provide for the public correction of incorrect or misleading information an institution or program releases about accreditation or pre-accreditation status, contents of reports of on-site reviews, and accreditation or pre-accreditation actions with respect to the institution or program [34 CFR 602.23(d) and 602.23(e)]. If the institution or program chooses to disclose any additional information, beyond the accreditation or pre-accreditation status that is within the scope of the USDE rule, such disclosure also must be accurate. Any public disclosure of information within the scope of the rule must include the agency’s street address, email address and phone number: Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; accreditation@apta.org; (703) 684-2782 or (703) 706-3245. If the Accreditation staff finds that an institution or program has released incorrect or misleading information within the scope of the USDE rule, then, acting on behalf of CAPTE the Accreditation staff will make public correction, and reserves the right to disclose this Summary of Action in its entirety for that purpose.
PUBLIC NOTICE OF DECISIONS BY CAPTE
Following all decisions, including decisions to place a program on warning, probation or show cause, or to deny candidacy, withdraw candidacy, withhold accreditation, or withdraw accreditation, the Accreditation staff will, within 24 hours of the official notification of the programs and institutions of the decisions, provide notice to the public by placing notice of the decisions on its web site.

RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT CHANGE(S)
The institution and program are responsible for notifying CAPTE of all reportable changes in the program prior to implementation. Unexpected changes are to be reported immediately after they occur. Reportable changes, some of which may require pre-approval, are described in Part 9 of CAPTE’s Rules of Practice and Procedure (https://www.capteonline.org/globalassets/capte-docs/capte-rules-practice-procedure.pdf). It is the program’s responsibility to be familiar with these expectations and to provide notification of program changes as required.
Commission’s Findings and reason for Decision:

The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education judged the program to be in compliance with the intent of all the Standards and Required Elements for Accreditation of Physical Therapist Assistant Education Programs except those noted below:

The program was judged to be in NON-COMPLIANCE with the following required elements. Non-compliance means that the program has in place less than a substantial portion of the components necessary to meet all aspects of the elements.

1C The program meets required student achievement measures\(^1\) and its mission and goals as demonstrated by actual program outcomes.

1.) 1C2 Ultimate licensure pass rates\(^2\) are at least 85%, averaged over two years. When two years of data are not available, the one-year ultimate rate must be sufficient to allow the program to meet the expectation for an ultimate two-year licensure pass rate of at least 85%.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

2.) 7D16 Use the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) to describe a patient's/client's impairments, activity, and participation limitations.

Course objectives and learning experiences for this standard were not provided.

In the Compliance Report provide at least two objectives that show the highest expected level of performance. Include course prefix and number, course name, objective number, and the full wording of the objective. Include objectives from clinical education courses, if applicable. Describe where the content is presented in the curriculum and provide example(s)/description(s) of the learning experiences that are designed to meet the practice expectations (i.e., describe where and how the content is taught throughout the curriculum).

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

The program was also judged to be in CONDITIONAL COMPLIANCE with the following required elements. Conditional compliance means that the program has in place a substantial portion, but not all, of the components necessary to meet all aspects of the elements.

3.) 1C6 The program meets expected outcomes related to its mission and goals.

\(^1\) Graduate and student achievement measures: The measures of outcome required by USDE (graduation rate, licensure pass rate, employment rate).

\(^2\) Licensure pass rate: The percentage of graduates who take and successfully pass the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE). Rates are considered to be stabilized one year after graduation.
INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

4.) 2B4  program resources are meeting, and will continue to meet, current and projected program needs including, but not limited to, financial resources, staff, space, equipment, technology, materials, library and learning resources, and student services.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

5.) 2B5  program policies and procedures, as well as relevant institutional policies and procedures meet program needs. This includes analysis of the extent to which program practices adhere to policies and procedures.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

6.) 4E  Formal evaluation of each core faculty member occurs in a manner and timeline consistent with applicable institutional policy. The evaluation includes assessments of teaching, service, and any additional responsibilities. The evaluation results in an organized faculty development plan that is linked to the assessment of the individual core faculty member and to program improvement.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

7.) 7B  The physical therapist assistant program curriculum includes content and learning experiences about the cardiovascular, endocrine and metabolic, gastrointestinal, genital and reproductive, hematologic, hepatic and biliary, immune, integumentary, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, nervous, respiratory, and renal and urologic systems; and the medical and surgical conditions across the lifespan commonly seen by physical therapist assistants.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

7D  Courses within the curriculum include content designed to prepare program students to:

8.) 7D2  Report to appropriate authorities suspected cases of abuse of vulnerable populations.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

9.) 7D3  Report to appropriate authorities suspected cases of fraud and abuse related to the utilization of and payment for physical therapy and other health care services.
INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

10.) 7D4 Perform duties in a manner consistent with the Guide for Conduct of the Physical Therapist Assistant (APTA) and Standards of Ethical Conduct (APTA) to meet the expectations of patients, members of the physical therapy profession, and other providers as necessary.

INSTITUTION COMMENTS:

11.) 7D6 Implement, in response to an ethical situation, a plan of action that demonstrates sound moral reasoning congruent with core professional ethics and values.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

12.) Patient/Client Management

7D15 Interview patients/clients, caregivers, and family to obtain current information related to prior and current level of function and general health status (e.g., fatigue, fever, malaise, unexplained weight change).

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

13.) 7D24c Demonstrate competence in performing components of data collection skills essential for carrying out the plan of care by administering appropriate tests and measures (before, during and after interventions) for the following areas: Mental Functions: detect changes in a patient’s state of arousal, mentation and cognition

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

14.) 7D24i Demonstrate competence in performing components of data collection skills essential for carrying out the plan of care by administering appropriate tests and measures (before, during and after interventions) for the following areas: Neuromotor Development: detect gross motor milestones, fine motor milestones, and righting and equilibrium reactions

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

15.) 7D24j Demonstrate competence in performing components of data collection skills essential for carrying out the plan of care by administering appropriate tests and measures (before,
during and after interventions) for the following areas:  Pain: administer standardized questionnaires, graphs, behavioral scales, or visual analog scales for pain; recognize activities, positioning, and postures that aggravate or relieve pain or altered sensations

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

16.) **Practice Management**

7D30  Describe aspects of organizational planning and operation of the physical therapy service.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE:

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION  
Due September 1, 2023

The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education is unable to determine compliance with the following required element(s) and therefore requests additional information:

17.) **1C4**  Students demonstrate entry-level clinical performance during clinical education experiences prior to graduation.

INSTITUTION RESPONSE: