UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

Course: PTHY 7324  Theory and Practice of Evidence Based Physical Therapy

Course Description: An advanced course for physical therapists which focuses on the theory and practice of making clinical decisions by integrating best available evidence with clinical judgment and patient/client values in the quest for efficacious and effective physical therapy practice. Concepts related to critical appraisal of literature are reviewed and then applied to clinical practice topics of interest to the learners by the acquisition, analysis, synthesis, and discussion of information by the learners. The context of the clinical practice topics will relate to the essential elements of patient/client management in each of the four practice pattern categories (categories as defined by the Guide to Physical Therapist Practice). The goal of the course is for the learners to advance as clinical scholars in their ability to collect and analyze existing information on focused clinical questions, to formulate evidence based clinical decisions, and to mentor and role model evidence based physical therapy practice. The course is delivered electronically via the university’s web based platform and students need computer and high-speed Internet resources.

Pre-requisites: Admission to PhD Program or consent of instructor.

Credit Hours: 3 (online course, equivalent to 45 classroom contact hours)

Semester: Fall, 2012

Course Coordinator: James Fletcher PhD,PT,ATC
Office: PTC 306, office hrs by appointment; Ph: 501-450-5556; fletcher@uca.edu


Additional required readings will be provided electronically, in full-text

Additional Resources Needed to Take This Course: Resources needed to take this fully electronic (online) distance course: 1) a computer no more than 4 years old with high-speed Internet access (recommend at least 1.5 mbps download & 0.5 mbps upload speed), 2) access to Blackboard Learning System via myUCA portal at http://my.uca.edu, and 3) access to Centra webinar system via http://centra.uca.edu.

Course Goals and Objectives: At completion of the course, the student shall be able to:
1. Discuss the factors and circumstances driving the evidence based practice movement in healthcare.
2. Describe different forms of evidence, the characteristics of desirable evidence, and differentiate the strengths and weaknesses of the hierarchy of evidence.
3. Describe the type of evidence needed to answer clinical questions within each element of the patient/client management model (eg. examination, evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, intervention).
4. Develop focused and answerable physical therapy questions within each element of the patient/client management model and in each of the four practice pattern categories.
5. Find and describe the best available evidence by conducting a systematic, thorough, yet efficient search for evidence, critically appraise and synthesize those sources of evidence, and identify their type/level on the hierarchy of evidence.

6. Define the concepts of efficacy and effectiveness in physical therapy practice and suggest mechanisms for increasing efficacy and effectiveness in a specific practice environment.

7. Discuss the contribution and importance of evidence, clinical judgment, expertise, and patient/client values in evidence based physical therapy.

8. Discuss the contribution and importance of clinical prediction rules and clinical practice guidelines in evidence based physical therapy.

9. Critically appraise evidence concerning tests and measures, prognostic factors, interventions, and outcomes in physical therapy.

10. Recommend areas for further research related to examination, evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, plan of care, interventions, and outcomes assessment for selected types of conditions and patients/clients.

11. Discuss the barriers to evidence based physical therapy and potential strategies for overcoming those barriers in clinical practice.

12. Function as a clinical scholar by persistently collecting and analyzing published evidence on focused clinical questions and formulate evidence based clinical decisions regarding patient/client management.

13. Demonstrate leadership by role modeling evidence-based practice and serving as a mentor for other practitioners in the areas of examination, evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, plan of care, interventions, and outcomes assessment.

Course Requirements & Evaluation of Student Learning:

1. **Online Discussions** (8) - Various topics (eg. course content, readings, etc.) will be discussed online via threaded electronic discussion; each student will be required to contribute his/her own originally composed discussions/comments. The specific number of required postings per student per topic will be announced as each discussion topic is launched. The discussion topic will be generated by a course instructor. Students are expected to ask questions, comment on other student's postings, and expound on relevant tangents. Moreover, discussions should be engaging, thought-provoking, opinionated, well-thought-out remarks and should demonstrate, when appropriate to the topic, the student’s developing ability to function as a clinical scholar - - one who synthesizes and analyzes information about patient management. Professional, respectful behavior should be rigidly adhered to in all discussions.

2. **Annotated Bibliographies** (4) - The student will complete an annotated bibliography to evaluate and synthesize published research evidence on a focused clinical question in each of the following areas: musculoskeletal PT, neuromuscular PT, cardiopulmonary PT, and integumentary PT. The focused clinical questions will relate to examination, evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, intervention, or outcome. The purpose is to develop and judge each student’s ability to function as a clinical scholar in analyzing published literature to answer clinical questions - - as part of the process of making evidence-based judgments regarding patient/client management. This includes making recommendations about areas needing further research. More detailed instructions, including deadline dates, will be provided.

3. **Final Exam** - Students will be required to complete a final exam based on required reading material and discussion topics. The exam will be on-campus and be scheduled by appointment during finals week.
COURSE GRADING:

Course Points Summary:
- Participation in online discussions topics @30 points each. At least 8 discussions, possibly more.
- 4 Annotated Bibliographies @ 100 points each
- Unannounced online quizzes & brief assignments @ 50 points total
- Comprehensive Final Exam: 100 pts
- Minimum Total Points for the Course: 760 points

GRADING POLICY:

Grading Scale: 90-100% = A  82-89% = B  74-81% = C  66-73% = D  Below 66% = F

Attendance Policy (during synchronous e-learning sessions):
The vast majority of the time spent by students “attending” this class online will be done via asynchronous e-learning (eg. flexible time when all students are NOT logged in at the same time and NOT interacting in real-time). Most likely, there will be a limited number of occasions of scheduled synchronous e-learning (online chat, webinar, etc.). Attendance is mandatory during synchronous sessions and attendance will be monitored. Excessive tardiness (more than 1 tardy) and absence without an acceptable reason are considered unprofessional behavior and will result in a 20 point penalty. The penalty will double for each subsequent attendance infraction. Again, this policy applies only to scheduled, synchronous learning sessions.

Make-up of a Course Requirement:
Circumstances may arise that cause a student to miss a course requirement deadline. If the student gives proper notification before the deadline passes AND the reason is excusable, then all points will be allowed to be made up.

Other policies:
Please refer to the UCA Student Handbook (http://www.uca.edu/student/dean/student_handbook.php) regarding policies covering Sexual Harassment and Academic policies.

Academic Integrity:
The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the UCA Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of these policies.

Disabled Student Services:
The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need accommodations under this Act due to a disability, contact the Office of Disability Services at 450-3613 or go their office in the UCA Student Health Center, Suite 212.

Student Evaluation of the Course & Instructor
Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the 12th week of instruction through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.
Selected Bibliography:

Relevant to online delivery of course content, including synchronous instruction:
1. Accessing the course via Blackboard at https://my.uca.edu Log in using UCA network account ID and password, then click on the My Courses tab and choose the current semester.
2. Blackboard Learning System assistance, FAQs, and instructions at http://uca.edu/it/blackboard
3. Centra web conferencing system assistance, FAQs, and instructions at http://uca.edu/it/centra

Relevant to the course content (alphabetical order):

Weblinks for computer-Internet based searches for research literature:
25. APTA Hooked on Evidence database (APTA members only): http://www.hookedonevidence.org
26. APTA's Open Door Portal to EBP (APTA members only): http://www.apta.org/OpenDoor
27. APTA Physical Therapy Journal website; full-text database: http://ptjournal.apta.org
28. Dovepress open access to research: http://www.dovepress.com
30. PEDro (Physiotherapy Evidence Database): http://www.pedro.org.au
32. UCA Library Electronic Databases entry: http://uca.edu/library/researchdatabases
33. UCA Interlibrary Loan system: http://libguides.uca.edu/interlibraryloan