

*Central Michigan University
School of Rehabilitation and Medical Sciences
Graduate Program in Physical Therapy*

Petition for Course Waiver

Section I – to be filled out by the student

Student's name: _____ Date: _____

Course name and number for which a waiver is being requested. (Use a separate form for each course): _____

Describe your prior educational experiences that are to serve as the basis for the petition: _____

List the materials provided in support of your petition: _____

Section II – to be filled out by the instructor of the course being considered for the waiver

Course instructor's name: _____

The student submitting this form is petitioning the Physical Therapy Program faculty for a waiver of a required course, which you teach in the curriculum. In considering this petition we would appreciate your comments and recommendation. Our concern is that if a course is to be waived the student must have had previous experiences which provided comparable content; that the student had achieved an acceptable level of knowledge and skill in the area; that the current level of knowledge and skill is sufficient; and that the context of their learning experiences were appropriate for their physical therapy education.

After reviewing this petition and the supporting materials provided by the student, my recommendation is as follows:

_____ Recommend approval of the petition

_____ Recommend approval of the petition after the student completes the following tasks or activities: _____

_____ Recommend that the following activities be substituted for the course under consideration: _____

_____ Recommend denial of the petition

Course Instructor's signature: _____ Date: _____

Section III – **It is the responsibility of the student to insure that this section is completed.**

_____ Required activities completed

Course Instructor's signature: _____ Date: _____

Section IV – to be filled out by the Physical Therapy Program Director

_____ Student transcripts and grades verified

Disposition of the petition: _____

_____ Student notified of the faculty decision

Physical Therapy Program Director's signature: _____ Date: _____

**Central Michigan University
Physical Therapy Program**

Policy on Course Waivers

General Considerations:

In a professional program such as Physical Therapy, the faculty is charged with the responsibility of assuring that, at the time of graduation, each and every graduate is competent in all areas of knowledge and skill necessary to practice in the profession. Providing this assurance requires that the faculty has a high degree of control over the curriculum and training of students in the program, and that there is a high degree of accountability in any consideration of exceptions to the requirements of the program. Any request for waiver of a Physical Therapy Program requirement is considered an exception to the requirements of the program, and will be treated as such.

There are many issues of educational concern that must be considered in entertaining a request for waiver of a program requirement. The most important of these are outlined below, and will be used as the basis for decisions regarding petitions for course waivers.

1. Equivalency of content. If a waiver is to be considered a student must demonstrate that they have acquired knowledge and experience equivalent to that for which the waiver is requested. Such experience may have been acquired by previous coursework at CMU or elsewhere, by continuing education and/or professional certification, by work experience, or by other means. A student may demonstrate their experience by providing transcripts or certificates of accomplishment, by presenting products that demonstrate their mastery of a topic area, by taking equivalency examinations, or by other means.
2. How well was it learned. A student must demonstrate accountability for the content of a learning experience to show that they did, in fact, master the content that was provided in a learning opportunity. Most often this would be in the form of a passing course grade, however, it may be demonstrated by other appropriate means.
3. Current level of knowledge. That a student previously had mastered a topic area is not sufficient for the current requirements of the Physical Therapy Program. In order to receive a waiver of a course requirement a student must have achieved equivalence within the 7 years prior to their scheduled graduation from the PT program, and must provide evidence that they continue to have a sufficient level of knowledge and skills in the topic area. In special circumstances, a student may be able to demonstrate current knowledge even if their initial learning experience in the area was more than 7 years prior to graduation. In most cases this would require that the student be using the information continuously since then.
4. Context of the learning. We know that much of what we learn is context specific, i.e. the mastery of an area of knowledge or skill is often specific to the context in which it was

learned, and the learner is often unable to generalize it to other contexts. Because of this the faculty will also consider the context of the learning in their deliberations regarding a request for course waiver.

Procedure:

For any individual student a maximum of 15 semester hours will be considered for waivers in the Physical Therapy Program. The instructor of the course that is being considered for a waiver will be asked to provide a recommendation for consideration by the Physical Therapy Program faculty. Final decisions regarding course waivers are made by the Physical Therapy Program faculty. Waivers will only be granted when the faculty has determined to their satisfaction that the student has previously had equivalent content in the area being considered, that the student achieved an acceptable level of knowledge and skill in the area, that the current level of knowledge and skill is sufficient, and that the context of their learning experiences was appropriate for their physical therapy education. The following courses are not eligible for waivers: Patient Care I-IV, Clinical Education I-V, and PT Seminar I-IV.

In order to petition for waiver of a course students should proceed with the following steps:

1. Obtain a copy of the Petition for Course Waiver form from the end of this document or in the Physical Therapy office, and fill out the top section.
2. Assemble the appropriate supportive materials for faculty members to consider the petition. This may include copies of transcripts, course syllabi, course papers or exams, textbooks, certificates or other evidence of achievement.
3. Deliver the petition form and supporting materials to the PT office manager who will forward the petition and supporting materials to the instructor of the course that is being considered for waiver.
4. For waiver petitions to be considered, completed petitions must be submitted for review no later than 2 weeks prior to the end of the semester preceding the semester in which the course is offered.

The course instructor will review the petition and supporting materials and provide a recommendation to the Physical Therapy Program faculty in the middle section of the Petition for Course Waiver form. Recommendations may include the following options:

- Approve petition for course waiver
- Approve petition following completion of specified tasks or activities
- Substitute another activity rather than waive the course (such as another course or an independent study)
- Deny petition for course waiver

The course instructor will deliver the petition to the Physical Therapy Program Director for inclusion on a faculty meeting agenda.

The Physical Therapy Program faculty will consider the petition at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting where it will make a decision. Students will be informed of the faculty's decision by the Physical Therapy Program Director as soon as possible following the decision.

If the waiver is conditionally approved, (i.e., a student needs to complete some additional requirements as a condition for waiving a course), the student is responsible for completing requirements and ensuring that the appropriate faculty member signs the waiver form indicating satisfactory completion of requirements. Completed waiver forms should be returned to the student's file (HPB 1220) and will be necessary for graduation audit purposes.