50 YEARS OF PHYSICAL THERAPY EDUCATION

The Division of Physical Therapy Education looks forward to hosting a spring event to celebrate our 50th graduating class from UMMC. Yes, we know that our first graduating class was 1972 – 51 years ago. Did you know . . .

- In 1991, the Physical Therapy Education program transitioned to a Master of Science program from a Bachelor of Science with no graduating class that year.
- In 2001, the first Doctor of Physical Therapy cohort started and graduated in 2004!
- The “Golden Anniversary” class will graduate in May 2023.

Here are a few more fun facts:

- In 1972 there were 12 graduates and 4 faculty on 1 campus. Graduates received their bachelor’s degree.
- In 2023 there will be 63 graduates and 18 faculty between 2 campuses. Graduates will receive their doctorate in Physical Therapy.
- In 2021, the Orthopedic Residency accepted its first cohort of 2 residents.

There is more information to come, so watch your email, Facebook and Twitter feeds!

See the program history timeline on page 3.
Welcome to the Class of 2025!

On Monday, August 15, family members and friends came to support the entering Doctor of Physical Therapy Class of 2025 as they received their white coats in the College of Allied Health Professions Professionalism Ceremony held at the Baxter Arena. The Professionalism Ceremony is a rite of passage for students as they begin their journeys in each of the respective College of Allied Health Professions’ programs.

Less formal orientation activities for the new PT students included the Second Annual Poker Walk, in which students familiarize themselves with the campus by reporting to specified locations and re-introducing themselves to waiting faculty and staff members. In addition, several PT3 class officers led the new students in a rousing game of Family Feud. The game served to introduce the new students on each campus to using the classroom technology.

The UNMC PT Class of 2025 is the fifty-third entering class in the PT program. It consists of 66 students, 50 students based on the Omaha campus and 16 students based on the Kearney campus. The class is composed of 55 students from Nebraska, 9 students from 7 other states and 2 international students.
STUDENT: 
Joel Schroeder, Class of 2023

HOMETOWN: 
Paxton, Nebraska

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE: 
Chadron State College, Bachelor of Science in Human Biology 
Rural Health Opportunities Program student

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS, LEADERSHIP, AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES 
Student Member, American Physical Therapy Association 
Member, Students of the University of Nebraska – American Physical Therapy Association 
UNMC College of Allied Health Professions Student Ambassador 
Nebraska Special Olympics Health Screening Volunteer 
UNMC SHARING Clinic Service Provider

What Led Him to Physical Therapy: I have always had a dream of working in the healthcare profession, being able to serve others and make a long-lasting impact on someone’s life. When I sat down and compared my personality, interests, and passions with various healthcare professions, physical therapy stuck out to me. As a physical therapist, you spend so much time directly with your patient, getting to build a personal relationship with them and helping them to improve their overall quality of life.

Favorite Moment in PT School: One of my favorite aspects so far in physical therapy school has been the ability to become lifelong friends with my classmates on both the Kearney and Omaha campuses . . . Due to the fact that we started our physical therapy schooling during the COVID-19 pandemic, our initial Professionalism Ceremony was virtual. One of the best, most humbling, and most rewarding moments was getting to have a Professionalism Ceremony 2.0 with all our classmates, both Omaha and Kearney, to begin our PT2 year and getting to don our white coats and say the Pledge of a Healthcare Professional together as a big class.

Favorite Quotes: “Find the Joy in the Journey.” | “And I am certain that God, who began a good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.” – Philippians 1:6

Advice for Others: Find your people, be loyal and humble, pushing each other to be the best versions of yourself that you can possibly be. Always remember you are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think!

What Others Have to Say: 
Joel is quick to volunteer to help with Campus visits or other activities involving our RHOP/KHOP students who attend UNK or the state colleges. He always presents himself with a smile and a positive, encouraging attitude toward these students who are completing their undergraduate studies. He serves as a great role model for the program and the profession!

Joel often serves as a leader for his class using his strong communication skills. He is professional about presenting an issue and discussing it with faculty or staff.

Joel is always volunteering to help with events and is quick to respond to emails. He has done great volunteer work, along with his leadership roles.
FACULTY

Siu and Team Receive Patent for Simulator

Joseph Siu, PhD, along with Carl Nelson, PhD, and Hesham Ali, PhD, recently received a patent for a Portable Camera Aided Simulator (PortCAS) for Minimally Invasive Surgical Training. PortCAS is the first product their research team developed in their start-up company, Adeptus Interactive, currently incubated in UNeTECH.

PortCAS is a portable and low-cost trainer for laparoscopic surgical skills acquisition. This video demonstrates how it works.

Dr. Siu said, “We hope that this PortCAS system will be available for all medical students and residents at UNMC and beyond to practice their minimally invasive surgical skills whenever and wherever they want. They just need a laptop, internet and PortCAS, then they are ready to go!”

Faculty Awards and Recognition

Betsy J. Becker, PT, DPT, PhD, CLT-LANA, is the recipient of the 2022 Mary Ellen Sacksteder Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Advancement of Physical Therapy by the American Physical Therapy Association’s (APTA) Nebraska Chapter. This is the organization’s highest award. It is presented in recognition of outstanding achievement and involvement in various aspects of the physical therapy profession including patient care, administration, consultation, education, research, publications, involvement in professional organizations, and service to the community.

Dr. Becker is an Associate Professor, the Director of the Division of Physical Therapy Education, and the Chair of the Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Kellie Gossman, PT, DPT, CLT, PCS, is the recipient of the APTA Nebraska Chapter’s 2022 PT Achievement in Education Award. This award recognizes the recipient’s achievement in education, practice, research and service to the APTA-Nebraska Chapter, which is widely known by the general membership or attested to by other APTA-Nebraska members in leadership positions.

Continued on page 7.
Dr. Gossman is an Assistant Professor in the UNMC Division of Physical Therapy Education. She completed Klose Training Lymphedema Certification in 2013 and has been board certified in pediatric physical therapy since 2018. In the DPT program, she serves as the course coordinator for the following courses: Human Movement 1 and Clinical Anatomy of the Thorax, Abdomen and Perineum.

Dr. Becker and Dr. Gossman were presented their awards by the president of the APTA Nebraska Chapter, Grace Knott, PT, at an Awards Ceremony and Reception on April 8, at Southeast Community College in Lincoln.

Kellie Gossman, PT, DPT, CLT, PCS was also awarded the 2022 Early Career Achievement Award from the University of Nebraska Medical Center Alumni Association and the College of Allied Health Professions Alumni Council. Dr. Gossman earned her DPT degree from UNMC in 2012.

Her nominator had this to say about her: “Dr. Gossman has consistently demonstrated early achievements in patient care, teaching and community in the 12 years since her graduation. She is always striving to better herself and, within the first five years of practice, she completed extra training to become a Certified Lymphedema Therapist (CLT) and then later, become a Board Certified Clinical Specialist in Pediatric Physical Therapy (PCS), being one of a very limited percentage of physical therapists possessing such credentials. In her teaching, she provides high-quality, engaging and innovative education to students of many disciplines. Her knowledge and expertise have garnered her attention on local, regional and national levels and her achievements bring great recognition to UNMC.”

Wellsandt Earns Promotion and Tenure

Elizabeth Wellsandt, PT, DPT, PhD, OCS was recently promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure. Dr. Wellsandt earned her DPT from UNMC in 2009 and her PhD in Biomechanics and Movement Science from the University of Delaware in 2016. She joined the UNMC Division of Physical Therapy Education faculty in 2016.
2022 Distinguished Alumnus Award

Lisa L. Black, PT, DPT was awarded the 2022 Distinguished Alumnus Award from the University of Nebraska Medical Center Alumni Association and the College of Allied Health Professions Alumni Council. Dr. Black earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Therapy from UNMC in 1982. She later earned her DPT degree from Creighton University in 2006. Dr. Black is a Professor and the Director of Clinical Education for the Physical Therapy program in the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions at Creighton University in Omaha.

Her nominator had this to say about her: "Dr. Black has carved an impressive record of expertise in patient care, research, clinic management and corporate administration, which has advanced the breadth and scope of physical therapy practice, locally and nationally. It is delightful to see this level of accomplishment by a UNMC PT Alum who serves as a role model for current and future health care professionals. She collaboratively leads as a most humble, mission-centered role model for students and established clinicians alike."

Dr. Black was recognized at an Awards Reception on June 10 as part of the College of Allied Health Professions All-College Alumni Reunion.
Laura E. Sinell Memorial Scholarship for Physical Therapy

Laura Elizabeth Sinell was born and raised in Shakopee, MN. She graduated from Shakopee High School in 2011 and attended Concordia College in Moorhead, MN, graduating Magna Cum Laude with her Bachelor's degree in 2015. Ms. Sinell valued education and her passion for helping others led her to pursue a career as a Physical Therapist. She entered the Doctor of Physical Therapy Education Program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in the fall semester of 2015.

Ms. Sinell was a caring, witty, intelligent woman who was passionate about helping people and the profession of physical therapy. She grew to be a strong, independent, confident professional with a bright smile and infectious laugh. She was beloved by her classmates and friends and thrived as a young professional contributing to her class, the program and the community. She had a zeal for life and her optimism was contagious.

On March 20, 2018, Ms. Sinell was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia (AML). She fought tirelessly to complete her education despite undergoing treatments for cancer. Through her resilience and perseverance, Ms. Sinell successfully completed the program of study and was awarded her DPT Degree in 2018. Throughout this time, she maintained her optimism, caring attitude, and passion for helping others. She was an inspiration to her classmates, faculty, friends and family.

Dr. Sinell was able to return to Minnesota after graduating. In the fall of 2018, she had a relapse and her fight with cancer ended when she passed away in December surrounded by her family. While Dr. Sinell never got to share her compassion and knowledge with patients as an independent practitioner, she was a shining example of a Physical Therapist professional.

Dr. Sinell’s family created the Laura E. Sinell Memorial Scholarship for Physical Therapy to honor Dr. Sinell and her pursuit to help others as a Physical Therapist. This scholarship is awarded to a deserving student from Minnesota attending the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

The inaugural awardee of the Laura E. Sinell Memorial Scholarship for Physical Therapy is Samantha Granec. Ms. Granec is a PT2 student in the DPT Education Program at the UNMC. Ms. Granec is from Mahtomedi, MN, and is a native Minnesotan. Her undergraduate degree was completed at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse majoring in Exercise and Sport Science. Her chosen career in physical therapy comes from her passion to serve others through improving movement and providing patients with greater self-efficacy to enhance their futures. Ms. Granec hopes to practice with the pediatric population and those with developmental disabilities. At UNMC, she is a LEND program participant in pursuit of her goals. Ms. Granec plans to return to Minnesota though anticipates gaining additional experiences before returning to her home state.

When asked what it means to her to be the recipient of this scholarship Ms. Granec replied, “I am honored and thankful. While I did not know Dr. Laura Sinell personally, I am extremely honored to carry on part of her legacy here at UNMC. If I have half the courage and fortitude she had, I would be grateful.” In addition, “I truly love Minnesota and physical therapy and I am grateful to share my passions with others, while I soak up every minute of learning in and about Nebraska – thank you to all who have helped me learn!”
Find Your Classmates!

The UNMC Leon S. McGoogan Health Sciences Library has archived the Physical Therapy class composites from 1972 - 2020. To see them, click here.

UNMC Alumnus named CEO

Congratulations to 2005 Alumnus Robert J. Dyer, PT, DPT, OCS, WCC! In May, Dr. Dyer was named Chief Executive Officer of the Cozad Community Health System in Cozad, Nebraska. Dr. Dyer has also served as the Site Coordinator of Clinical Education and a Clinical Instructor for UNMC PT students for many years. For the complete article, please click here.
Human Anatomy content is now offered in a series of courses that align with clinical application within the DPT curriculum. This series was developed over five years with collaboration among faculty in the Division of Physical Therapy Education and anatomy faculty from the College of Medicine (Genetics, Cell Biology and Anatomy) and the College of Allied Health Professions (Department of Allied Health Professions Education, Research, & Practice).

The first course, PHYT 574: Human Anatomy, is offered in the first semester of the DPT curriculum. This newly revised course includes an emphasis on the neuromusculoskeletal system and aligns with the other courses in the new DPT curriculum. Students are divided into groups to dissect the trunk, neck and limbs of cadavers and study pro-sections to explain how muscles act through their attachments. Learning activities promote synthesis through structure identification on modern imaging techniques and explanations, and discussion of synergistic, stabilizing, and antagonistic actions are integrated throughout the course. Histology, embryology, neuroanatomy, surface anatomy, and sectional anatomy are integrated throughout the course modules.

The second anatomy course, Clinical Anatomy of the Thorax, Abdomen, and Perineum is held during the spring semester of the first year. This course emphasizes the identification, description, location and relationships between clinically relevant anatomical structures and organs in the thoracic, abdominal, and perineal regions. The content presented in lecture and with pro-sections includes an introduction to anatomical position and association related to physical examination and potential interventions.

In the final semester of the program, students can enroll in an advanced clinical course elective on an anatomy topic. This course provides a comprehensive review of a selected area of the human body (anatomy) relevant to rehabilitation for students in their final year of education. Students explore joint structure via dissection or pro-section of cadavers and discuss the anatomical, biomechanical, and kinesiologic basis of normal and abnormal function with faculty.

Course coordinators are anatomists Assistant Professor Satera Nelson, MS, and Assistant Professor Ethan Schroeder, PhD. They have been colleagues and friends for 9 years. They are both “Woodman Scholars” having met and taught in the UNL Anatomy Program. They have each completed the Master’s of Medical Anatomy Program at UNMC and now have offices across the hall from one another. On the personal side, Satera can read a book faster than Ethan can open one. Satera is a world traveler and Ethan has covered the same distance chasing his 2-year-old son. Satera and Ethan both find the time spent in the anatomy lab with students to be the most rewarding part of their positions.
The UNMC Orthopedic Physical Therapy Residency Program’s inaugural cohort of residents, Renee Herbers, PT, DPT, ATC, and Caleb Nabower, PT, DPT, completed all requirements and graduated from the post-professional training program on August 19, 2022.

This 13-month, post-professional training program includes a structured didactic curriculum, clinical practice and clinical mentoring at Nebraska Medicine’s Lauritzen Outpatient Center, observation with physicians and other rehab providers, teaching in the area of orthopedics and the completion of a scholarly activity project.

Dr. Herbers and Dr. Nabower assisted in the development and instruction of an elective course for the UNMC Doctor of Physical Therapy program titled “Anatomy of the Upper Limb and Application to Physical Therapy Evaluation and Treatment.” They also assisted with several lab courses throughout the curriculum and completed Level 1 Credentialed Clinical Instructor training. In addition to regular didactic sessions, the residents led journal club discussions and in-services, presented clinical cases for grand rounds, and served as faculty advisors for DPT students volunteering for UNMC’s SHARING clinic.

Residency Program Director Megan Frazee, PT, DPT, OCS, MTC, FAAOMPT stated, “This inaugural cohort was instrumental in helping to shape the UNMC Orthopedic PT Residency program and took part in the accreditation site visit in May 2022. We wish them all the best in their future endeavors and thank them for choosing to further their education with UNMC!”

The Division of Physical Therapy Education at UNMC is also working to create a Sports Residency, which would be the first Sports Residency program in the state of Nebraska. Applications will be available in the Spring of 2023 with the inaugural cohort of 2 residents planned to start in July 2023. Information will be added to the website later this year.

Please email if you are interested or have questions: ptresidency@unmc.edu
GLOBAL HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM (GHOP)

Summer Experiential Education Program (SEEDS)

The UNMC Division of Physical Therapy Education has offered a 3-week Summer Experiential Education (SEED) program since 2017 for international PT students. This summer, the program enrolled 33 international students from 7 universities around the world.

The program includes online lectures with PT faculty, student roundtable sessions with current UNMC DPT students, and group discussions/presentations. The purpose of the SEED program is to provide an early experiential opportunity for junior PT students to learn about PT education at UNMC and the PT profession in the United States.

Director of the Global Health Opportunity Program and Associate Professor in the Division of Physical Therapy Education Joseph Siu, PhD, said, “We hope to identify future candidates to apply to our DPT Global program through this SEED program. This is the fifth year we’ve opened the program for international students to apply. We did two years of an in-person model and moved to an online version since 2021.”

Since 2017, we have enrolled more than 90 international PT students to the SEED program. Eight of them have been successfully admitted to our DPT Global program and 2 students are applying for Fall 2023.

“Such outcomes are very encouraging!” said Dr. Siu.

Masters in Rehabilitation Sciences Program for International Students

In response to an increasing need for advancing professional education globally, the Division of PT Education’s Global Health Opportunities Program (GHOP), in cooperation with enthusiastic international partners and institutions, is developing a Master’s level program for international PT students and practitioners. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international travel and study abroad programs, this Master’s program will be offered fully online.

The new Master’s in Rehabilitation Sciences (MRS) program will advance the physical therapy profession in three areas: clinical reasoning, evidence-based practice and professionalism. Fourteen new courses are currently under development. The MRS program will offer two different tracks: Musculoskeletal Physical Therapy and Neuromuscular Physical Therapy. Prospective students can enroll in either track based on their clinical interests and career development preferences. In order to receive an MRS degree, each student will complete 30 credit hours and a capstone project.

Director of the GHOP MRS Program and Associate Professor in the Division of PT Education Joseph Siu, PhD, said, “This online MRS program is learner centric and designed at the right time. It will serve the unmet needs for international PT students and practitioners to pursue their advanced training in PT remotely without putting their current jobs on hold, nor leaving their family members amid the pandemic.”

The MRS program is expected to begin in Spring 2023 upon final approval by the University of Nebraska Board of Regents.
Vicki Kennel, PhD, Dawn Venema, PT, PhD, and Anne Skinner, RHIA, MS recently gave an invited presentation at a national conference due to their work on the CAPTURE Falls project. They presented, “Team Learning from Falls: A Safe Table,” at the Patient Safety Evaluation System 2022 Virtual Summit on May 25, 2022. The conference was jointly sponsored by the Hospital Quality Institute and the Alliance for Quality Improvement and Patient Safety.

Over 200 nurses, administrators, and quality improvement/patient safety professionals from across the country were in attendance.

Dr. Venema said, “We led the group through a case study of a patient who fell during hospitalization, discussing how interprofessional teams work at multiple levels of a hospital organization to reduce the patient’s fall risk and learn about changes that may need to be made throughout the organization to keep future patients safe from falls. The “safe table” format of this presentation means that attendees could confidentially share information to improve the quality and safety of health care delivery while legally protected by the Federal Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005."

CAPTURE Falls is a quality improvement and research initiative for fall-risk reduction for hospitalized patients. This project is currently funded by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program. Over the last decade, they’ve supported 31 critical access hospitals in Nebraska to improve their fall risk reduction practices through the provision of education and consultation, and the management of a secure online fall event reporting system called Know Falls.

**Recent Scholarly Activity**

**April 2022 – Present | Names in Bold are PT Faculty from UNMC**

**Publications**


Presentations


Manning J, Kim HJ, Boron JB, Venema D, Yentes JM. “Older adults not resilient to balance perturbations have less complexity than middle-aged and older adult that are resilient.” Poster presentation at the International Society of Posture and Gait Research 2022 Meeting; Montreal, Quebec, Canada; July 3-7, 2022.


Patent


Grants

PI = principal investigator

PI: Laura Bilek, PT, PhD
    Grant Name: NASA Nebraska Space Grant – UNO | Dates: 11/1/21-7/31/22
    Grant Name: Bone Health Technologies (TheraNova Muscle Study) | Dates: 6/1/22-12/31/22
    Grant Name: Bone Health Technologies (TheraNova Belt Study) | Dates: 4/1/22-8/31/23

PI: Mike Rosenthal, PT, DSc, ATC
    Grant Name: NRI Collaboration Initiative | Dates: 7/1/22-6/30/23

PI/Co-PI: Joseph Siu, PhD
    Grant Name: NU Collaboration Initiative: Hearing Loss, Mobility, and Fall Risk in Agricultural Workers | Dates: 7/1/22-6/30/23
    Grant Name: Great Plains IDeA-CTR Team Research Pilot Grant: Smart Wearable In-home Monitoring System for Healthy Aging in Rural Nebraska | Dates: 7/1/22-6/30/23
    Grant Name: NIH/NIBIB R56 Bridge grant (PID 27314) | Dates: 9/23/22-9/22/23

PI: Nikki Sleddens, PT, ABD
    Grant Name: NE Foundation for PT George Blanton Research Grant | Dates: 2/1/22-1/31/23
PI: Dawn M. Venema, PT, PhD
  Grant Name: Capture Falls | Dates: 9/1/21-8/31/22

PI: Elizabeth Wellsandt, PT, DPT, PhD, OCS
  Grant Name: DHHS/NIH/NIAMS R21: Osteoarthritis After ACL Injury: Establishing Cumulative Joint Loading as A Preventative Target | Dates: 2/1/21-1/31/22 (NCE thru 1/31/23)
  Grant Name: Rheumatology Research Foundation | Dates: 7/1/21-6/30/22
  Grant Name: Optimizing Movement and Physical Activity After Anterior Cruciate Ligament Injury (NRI Collaboration Initiative) | Dates: 7/1/21-6/30/22 (NCE thru 6/30/23)
  Grant Name: Great Plains IDeA-CTR Scholar Program grant | Dates: 7/1/22-6/30/23

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