

**ODESSA COLLEGE**  
**Physical Therapist Assistant Program**  
**Spring 2012**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Course Number** PTHA 1325  
**Course Title:** **Communication in Health Care**  
**Credit Hours:** 3  
**Contact Hours:** 48  
**Prerequisites:** PTHA 1201, 1305, 1413  
**Corequisite:** PTHA 1321, 1431  
**Instructor:** Lynn McKelvey  
**Phone:** Office – 335-6842 Cell – 638-6762  
**Email:** [lmckelvey@odessa.edu](mailto:lmckelvey@odessa.edu)  
**Office Hours:** Monday 8:30-11:30  
Tuesday 3:30-4:00  
Wednesday 8:30-11:30 & 1:00-4:00  
Thursday 3:30-4:00

**Course Description:**

Communication theories and principles for optimal delivery of health care. Encompasses psychosocial aspects of health care; verbal, nonverbal and written communication skills; patient-practitioner interaction, including working with diverse patient populations throughout the life span with special emphasis on the geriatric population; and concepts of the practitioner's self-esteem and self-management and their impact on the health care setting. (SCANS 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11)

**Required Textbooks:**

1. Patient/Practitioner Interaction, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, by Davis; Slack, Inc., 2006
2. Documentation Basics, by Erickson & McKnight; Slack, 2005
3. PTHA 1325 Course Packet for Spring 2012

**Objectives:**

After completing this course, the student should be able to:

- 1.0 Communicate appropriately and effectively with other members of the health care team utilizing the medical record.
- 2.0 Communicate appropriately and effectively both verbally and non-verbally.
- 3.0 Interact effectively and therapeutically with patients and their significant others.
- 4.0 Identify the process of grieving and its impact on the patient-practitioner relationship.
- 5.0 Identify and resolve ethical conflicts effectively.

**Competencies:**

- 1.0 To demonstrate competency in communicating appropriately and effectively with other members of the health care team utilizing the medical record, the student should be able to:
  - 1.1 Write legibly.
  - 1.2 \*Use correct spelling and proper grammar.
  - 1.3 \*Use appropriate terminology, abbreviations and formats.
  - 1.4 Identify the content categories of medical documentation.
  - 1.5 \*Sort information into the correct category.
  - 1.6 \*Identify pertinent information for inclusion in a progress note, as well as in the initial or interim evaluation and the discharge evaluation/summary as directed by the supervising physical therapist.
  - 1.7 \*Organize pertinent information in a concise, logical manner and write appropriate progress notes.
  - 1.8 \*Identify information from the medical record that is pertinent to physical therapy.
  - 1.9 \*Identify patient status, problems, treatment goals and treatment plans from the physical therapist's initial evaluation.
  - 1.10 \*Identify pertinent updated information from the physical therapy progress notes.

- 1.11 \*Describe the medical record's relationship to quality assurance in general and patient care audits specifically.
  - 1.12 \*Describe the relationship between proper documentation and third-party reimbursement.
  - 1.13 \*Identify legal ramifications of the medical record.
- 2.0 To demonstrate competency in communicating appropriately and effectively both verbally and non-verbally, the student should be able to:
- 2.1 \*Identify the necessary adjustments in volume and vocabulary for effective communication with patients and their significant others as well as other health care professionals.
  - 2.2 \*Organize information for verbal presentation in a concise, logical manner and at a level appropriate to audience abilities.
  - 2.3 \*Identify the components of non-verbal communication.
  - 2.4 \*Identify the magnitude of non-verbal communication's impact upon the therapeutic relationship.
  - 2.5 \*Identify the appropriate levels of listening for health care professionals.
  - 2.6 \*Describe and demonstrate active listening skills.
  - 2.7 \*Identify blocks to communication.
- 3.0 To demonstrate competency in interacting effectively and therapeutically with patients and their significant others, the student should be able to:
- 3.1 \*Identify concepts related to the practitioner's sense of self-awareness and well-being that impact the patient-practitioner relationship.
  - 3.2 \*Identify and differentiate constructive versus detrimental dependence in the patient-practitioner relationship.
  - 3.3 \*Identify and describe physiological, psychological and socioeconomic aspects of generation, age, culture, and presence of disability that impact the provision of physical therapy.
  - 3.4 \*Identify and describe methods to enhance relating to various patient categories.
  - 3.5 \*Identify and describe methods to enhance patient education.
  - 3.6 \*Identify effective methods of managing emotionally laden interactions.
- 4.0 To demonstrate competency in identifying the process of grieving and its impact on the patient-practitioner relationship, the student should be able to:
- 4.1 \*Identify and describe the five stages of grief and their components.
  - 4.2 \*Identify methods of relating effectively to patients in each stage of grief.
  - 4.3 Identify past, present and future trends in the sociological context of death and dying.
- 5.0 To demonstrate competency in identifying and resolving ethical conflicts, the student should be able to:
- 5.1 \*Identify biomedical ethical principles.
  - 5.2 \*Identify and describe sources / types of ethical conflicts.
  - 5.3 \*Utilize methods for effective ethical conflict resolution.

*\* Indicates integrated, core curriculum skills (math, reading, communication, technological literacy and/or critical thinking)*

**Methods of Presentation:**

Lectures, demonstrations, reading assignments, role-playing, outside projects and/or assignments, and field trip to area clinic to observe clinical computer use

**Course Requirements:**

In order to receive credit for this course, all students must:

- 1. Complete all outside assignments.
- 2. Complete the minimum required number of journal entries.
- 3. Complete all unit exams.
- 4. Complete the final exam.

<b>Grade Compilation:</b>	Blackboard Assignments	10%
	Discussion Board	10%
	Unit Tests	55%
	Final Exam	25%

**Grading Scale:**        90-100 = A  
                                  80-89 = B  
                                  70-79 = C  
                                  60-69 = D  
                                  Below 60 = F

*Note: Students must make a minimum grade of C in each PTA course in order to remain in the program.*

### **Procedure for Requesting Special Accommodations**

Odessa College complies with Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If the student has any special needs or issues pertaining to access to and participation in any class at Odessa College, please contact Becky Rivera-Weiss in the Office of Disability Services at 432-335-6861 to request assistance and accommodations.

Physical therapist assistant students with a disability who request reasonable accommodations should meet with the Program Director no later than the first week of classes. Reasonable accommodations will be provided as authorized by the Office of Disability Services as long as the ability to meet course requirements is not compromised. Physical Therapist Assistant faculty provide no accommodations without authorization. It is the student's responsibility to be a self-advocate when requesting accommodations. The student will need to meet with each course instructor at the beginning of class to discuss the particular accommodation needed. Documentation of special needs will be maintained in the student's file.

### **Professional Behavior:**

Professional behavior is absolutely essential both while the individual is a student in this program as well as after graduation. The Professional Behaviors Assessment form provides a standard for behavior and a mechanism for self-assessment by the student as well as assessment by faculty during the academic component of the program. If a faculty member observes consistent failure to demonstrate acceptable professional behavior by a student, the faculty member will utilize the assessment form as a tool for counseling the student. **Failure to respond appropriately to counseling regarding professional behaviors will result in dismissal from the program.**

### **Attendance:**

Regular attendance at lecture and lab is essential and has a direct effect on the final grade that a student earns in class. Non-attendance on the part of a student may result in grade penalty or may lead to dismissal from the program.

A student should attend all lecture and laboratory sessions. Habitual or patterned absenteeism in lecture or lab will not be tolerated. As soon as such a problem is identified, the student will be required to meet with the faculty to determine a course of action and, if the problem is not corrected, the student will be subject to dismissal from the program. Absences in laboratory sessions are particularly problematic because of the lost opportunity to practice skills; therefore, students will be penalized for missing more than one lab session per semester. Should a student miss more than one lab session, one point for each missed session will be deducted from the final course grade.

All absences must be reported to the appropriate faculty member prior to the start of class. If the faculty member cannot be reached directly, a voice mail message may be left. Failure to notify the faculty prior to an absence will affect the student's Professional Behaviors Assessment.

### **Acceptance of Late Assignments:**

Projects or outside assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned due date. Late papers will receive a 5% per day grade penalty. This penalty will continue to be assessed each day the assignment is not turned in.

### **Missing an Exam:**

Exams are defined as formally scheduled examinations covering a major portion of the course content and cumulatively comprising a relatively large percentage of the overall grade for a course. Every effort should be made by the student to be present for all exams. If it is necessary for a student to miss an exam, the instructor must be notified prior to the scheduled exam time and arrangements must be made for make-up. It is the instructor's option to give the same exam as the one missed or a different exam over the same content. If the exam is not made up within one class day, a 5% per day penalty will be assessed each day the exam is not taken.

**Quizzes:**

There are no scheduled quizzes in this course. However, if it is deemed necessary to encourage students to stay current on reading assignments, the instructor reserves the right to give unannounced quizzes. In the event that quizzes are given, the lowest quiz grade will be dropped and the remaining grades will be averaged with outside assignment grades for a total of 25% of the final grade.

**Blackboard Assignments:**

Written assignments will be required periodically throughout the course. Due dates can be found on the Course Schedule. Students will be required to access Blackboard to obtain instructions and written assignments. The written assignments will be submitted on Blackboard. Assignments grades will be averaged and comprises ten percent of the final course grade. Further instructions will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

**Discussion Board:**

Students are required to participate in the discussion board by responding to discussion questions that will be posted each week throughout the semester. A discussion board rubric will be used to grade weekly participation, a sample of which will be available on Blackboard and provided in class. The weekly participation time frame will run from 1:00 am Monday morning through midnight Sunday. Grading of the previous week's participation will take place on Monday and feedback will be provided by Tuesday evening. The discussion board grade comprises ten percent of the final course grade. Detailed requirements and instructions will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

**Netiquette:**

Remember we're all human.

It's easy to forget that there is a person behind the other computer, but try to remember. We can't see facial expressions or body language, so words can easily be misinterpreted. Be the same person online you are offline – which has two meanings: first, behave with the same ethics and standards of behavior online that you do offline; and second, feel free to let your personality show in your work and communication. Bottom line – be respectful, professional, and careful about what you say and how you say it.

**Emotions:**

Research with online groups indicates that emotions are strongly felt in cyberspace. People take a long time to mull over messages they feel are rude, inflammatory, or even questionable. People may interpret messages as hurtful and react to them in a defensive manner.

Be careful how you express your emotions and humor within in your emails or postings; avoid sarcasm completely. Due to the lack of verbal and nonverbal clues to our speech, our comments or jokes may be considered as unnecessary criticism and lead to serious misunderstandings. What means one thing to you may mean something completely different in a different culture; be sensitive to all people.

Avoid "all caps." Internet or email messages written in all caps are generally seen as SHOUTING, and that's considered just plain rude. Judicious capitalization to highlight an important point or to distinguish a title or heading is acceptable.

If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it before posting, in order to remove any strong language.

Avoid angry outbursts. Do not post, send, or reply when you are angry. Wait until you have calmed down and then compose the message.

**Manners:**

When joining a group or discussion, politely listen to others. Check for any "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQs) that pertain to communications and read these before contributing.

Follow all guidelines given.

Read first, write later. Don't add comments to a discussion until you have read the comments of other students, unless the assignment specifically asks you to.

Comments related to the content of previous messages should be posted under them to keep related topics organized and you should specify the person and the particular point you are following up on.

Keep your comments relevant to the topic of discussion. If you introduce a new topic, change the subject line appropriately.

Keep communication short and to the point. If you have several points you want to make, consider posting them individually in several focused messages rather than a single, lengthy, all-encompassing message.

Do not use acronyms unless they are common to the class.

Do not send commercial advertisements or SPAM to your classmates or instructors. Not only is it rude, it can result in adverse reactions.

Treat your faculty and fellow students with respect.

Never use profanity or slang. This isn't Facebook or Twitter or text-messaging.

Be forgiving. When someone makes a mistake – whether it's a spelling error, a so-called stupid question, or an unnecessarily long answer – be kind about it. If you decide to inform someone of a mistake, point it out politely and preferably by private email rather than in public.

Validate other members' ideas and efforts. Research indicates that groups that validate more have better outcome products. Use critical thinking skills while validating. Messages that contain "Way to go," "Right on," or simple "Wow!" require time to download and do not contribute to the group process. Comments mentioning why something is appreciated are more valuable.

If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the instructor in an email, not on the discussion board. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion may be new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the instructor.

Flaming:

Flaming is what people do when they express a strongly held opinion without holding back their emotions. It's the kind of message that usually gets a strong reaction from readers. Although flames might appear to be fun to write and to read, Netiquette forbids the perpetuation of flame wars – a series of angry messages, most of them from two or three people directed toward each other that can dominate the tone and destroy the camaraderie of a discussion group. It's unfair to the other members of the group.

Writing and Posting:

Use college level writing skills in all messages and postings. Use correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Messages are best constructed in a word processor, spell checked, and then pasted into the discussion board. It allows for more creativity and less online time. It will also minimize the chance that your message will be "lost."

Lay out your message for readability. Use spaces and breaks between paragraphs and long sentences to make your message easier to read.

Break messages down into short paragraphs for easier electronic reading.

Your message may be perfectly clear to you but confusing to your classmates. A good way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly and makes sense. Reading it aloud to another person is even better.

Use a meaningful and concise subject line so your readers will have a clear idea of your topic and ideas.

Acronyms and emoticons are popular but excessive use of them can make your message difficult to read. Some common and usually acceptable ones include:

FYI = for your information	:-) or :) = smiley face, happiness, pleasure
B/C = because	:( or :( = frowning face, displeasure
W/ = with	;-) or ;) = wink
BTW = by the way	:0 or :0 = shock, surprise
LOL = laughing out loud	:-/ or :/ = skepticism, unease, apologetic
IMO = in my opinion	:-D or :D = big grin, laughing
IMHO = in my humble opinion	:-p or :p = cheeky, playful

## **Course Outline:**

- I. MEDICAL RECORD
  - A. Purposes
  - B. Principles
  - C. Forms
  - D. Formats
    - 1. Rationale
    - 2. Components
    - 3. Writing Style
    - 4. Organization
  - E. Quality Assurance
- II. ETHICS
  - A. Principles
  - B. Ethical Conflicts
  - C. Resolution of Ethical Conflicts
- III. COMMUNICATION
  - A. Verbal
    - 1. Vocabulary
    - 2. Volume
    - 3. Organization
  - B. Non-verbal
    - 1. Importance
    - 2. Components
      - a. Paralanguage
      - b. Body Motions
      - c. Time
      - d. Space
  - C. Listening
    - 1. Levels
    - 2. Active Listening
  - D. Blocks to Communications
    - 1. Sending
    - 2. Receiving
- IV. PATIENT-PRACTITIONER INTERACTION
  - A. Awareness of Self
    - 1. Influences
    - 2. Values
  - B. Patient-Practitioner Relationship
    - 1. The Patient
      - a. Altered Role
      - b. Losses
      - c. Stigma
      - d. Privileges
      - e. Values
    - 2. The Relationship
      - a. Communication
      - b. Constructive Dependence
      - c. Detrimental Dependence
      - d. Boundaries
- V. RELATING TO VARIOUS PATIENT CATEGORIES
  - A. Geriatrics
  - B. Other Ages
    - 1. Infancy
    - 2. Childhood

- 3. Adolescence
- 4. Adulthood
- C. Generational Issues
- D. Culturally Competent Patient Care
- E. People with Disabilities

#### VI. GRIEF PROCESS

- A. Introduction
  - 1. Terminally Ill
  - 2. Chronic Illness or Disability
  - 3. Societal Attitudes
- B. Stages of Grief
- C. Implications for Physical Therapy

#### VII. PATIENT EDUCATION

- A. Introduction
- B. Health Behavior
- C. Health Literacy
- D. Techniques
- E. Implications for Physical Therapy

#### VIII. PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT

- A. Introduction
- B. Signs and Symptoms
- C. Causes & Risk
- D. Prevention and/or Intervention

**Course Schedule**

Assignments/Comments	TUESDAY 10:00 – 11:30	THURSDAY 10:00 – 11:30
<p style="text-align: right;">Week 1</p> <p><b>READ:</b> <u>Documentation for Physical Therapist Assistants (DOC)</u> Review Chs 1-7, Read Chs 8 &amp; 9</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">1/17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Introduction</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">1/19</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Documentation</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Week 2</p> <p><b>READ:</b></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">1/24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Documentation</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">1/26</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Documentation</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Week 3</p> <p><b>READ:</b> <u>Patent Practitioner Interaction (PPI)</u> Ch 4</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">1/31</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Documentation Quality Assurance</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Medical Record Exercises</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2/2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ethics</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Week 4</p> <p><b>READ:</b></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2/7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ethics</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2/9</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ethics</p>

Assignments/Comments	TUESDAY 10:00 – 11:30	THURSDAY 10:00 – 11:30
<p><b>READ:</b> <u>PPI</u> Chs 6, 7, 8, 10</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 5</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2/14</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TEST 1</b> Documentation Quality Assurance Ethics</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2/16</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communication</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 4 Exercises 1 &amp; 6</p>
<p><b>READ:</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 6</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2/21</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communication</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 10 Exercise 1</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2/23</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communication</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 6 Exercises 1, 2, &amp; 3 Ch 7 Exercises 1, 2, &amp; 3</p>
<p><b>READ:</b> <u>PPI</u> Chs 1, 2, 3, 5</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 7</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2/28</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3/1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Patient/Practitioner Relationship</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 5 Exercises 1 &amp; 2 Ch 1 Exercises 1, 3, &amp; 4</p>
<p><b>READ:</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 8</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3/6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Patient/Practitioner Relationship</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 2 Exercises 2 &amp; 3 Ch 3 Exercises 1 &amp; 2</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3/8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Patient/Practitioner Relationship</p>

Assignments/Comments	TUESDAY 10:00 – 11:30	THURSDAY 10:00 – 11:30
<p><b>READ:</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 9</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3/20</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TEST 2</b> Communication Patient/Practitioner Relationship</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3/22</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Generational Issues</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 9 Exercise 4</p>
<p><b>READ:</b> : <u>Geriatric Physical Therapy</u> Ch 2</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 10</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3/27</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Relating to Patients of All Ages</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3/29</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Relating to Geriatric Patients</p>
<p><b>READ:</b> <u>PPI</u> Chs 12, 13, 14</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 11</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4/3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Relating to Patients with Disabilities</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 12 Exercises 1, 2 &amp; 3</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4/5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Grief</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 14 Exercises (#s) 1, 2 &amp; 3</p>
<p><b>READ:</b> <u>PPI</u> Ch 9</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 12</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4/10</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TEST 3</b> Generational Issues Relating to Patients of All Ages Relating to Geriatric Patients Relating to Patients with Disabilities Grief</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4/12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cultural Competence</p>

Assignments/Comments	TUESDAY 10:00 – 11:30	THURSDAY 10:00 – 11:30
<p><b>READ: PPI</b> Chs 11</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 13</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4/17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cultural Competence</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 9 Exercises 1, 2 &amp; 3</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4/19</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Patient Education</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 11 Exercise 1 (#s 1 &amp; 2)</p>
<p><b>READ: PPI</b> Chs 15</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 14</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4/24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Professional Burnout</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Due:</b> Ch 15 Exercises 1, 2, 3, 4 &amp; 5</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4/26</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TEST 4</b> Cultural Competence Patient Education Professional Burnout</p>
<p><b>READ:</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 15</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">5/1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LECTURE Clinic Readiness</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">5/3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Review for Final</p>
<p><b>FINAL EXAM WEEK</b></p> <p>Date and time of final exam to be arranged</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Week 16</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">5/8</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">5/10</p>