



# PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM

University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health  
Department of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation

## Instructions for Writers of Recommendation Letters

### ➤ To the Letter Writer:

You have been asked to write a letter of recommendation addressed to the Physical Therapy Admissions Committee for an individual applying to the University of Wisconsin–Madison Doctor of Physical Therapy Program (DPT). In this letter, please comment on your relationship to this applicant, including the time frame in which you have known him/her. If you have completed a Patient Care Experience Form for the applicant, do not also write a letter of recommendation. Please provide insight into and specific examples of the applicant's unique, non-academic qualities that illustrate/represent/offer evidence of the applicant's potential to develop the professional behaviors necessary to become a physical therapist.

The UW–Madison DPT Program utilizes 10 generic criteria to facilitate student development of professional behaviors (see back). These behaviors have been accepted as defining professional behavior in physical therapy and have been adopted by other physical therapy programs in Wisconsin and in many other programs across the country. How you perceive these qualities in the applicant is helpful; however, it is not necessary to comment specifically on all 10 generic abilities.

Your assessment is important to us in evaluating this applicant's potential to develop the professional behaviors necessary to become a physical therapist. Thank you for your time and your assessment of this candidate.

Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Buckley Amendment), the candidate is entitled to review this letter of recommendation or to waive his/her right to access. If the candidate does not waive his/her right to review the letter and requests access, we will provide him/her with a copy.

Please address your letter of recommendation to the Physical Therapy Admissions Committee. Include this form with the letter of recommendation and send it directly to:

**Physical Therapy Admissions Committee**  
**5173 Medical Sciences Center**  
**1300 University Avenue**  
**Madison, WI 53706-1532**

### ➤ To the Applicant:

Please check the appropriate box and sign below before giving this form to the individual from whom you are requesting a letter of recommendation.

- I waive my right to review this letter of recommendation.
- I refuse to waive my right to review this letter of recommendation.

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Physical Therapy-Specific Generic Abilities:

### **Generic Ability**

### **Definition**

1. Commitment to Learning  
The ability to self assess, self correct and self direct; identify needs and sources of learning; continually seek new knowledge and understanding.
2. Interpersonal Skills  
The ability to interact effectively with patients, families, colleagues, other health care professionals and the community; deal effectively with cultural/ethnic diversity issues.
3. Communication Skills  
The ability to communicate effectively (speaking, body language, reading, writing, listening) for varied audiences and purposes.
4. Effective Use of Time and Resources  
The ability to obtain the maximum benefit from a minimum investment of time and resources.
5. Use of Constructive Feedback  
The ability to identify sources of feedback and to seek out feedback; to effectively use and provide feedback for improving personal interaction.
6. Problem-Solving  
The ability to recognize and define problems, analyze data, develop and implement solutions, and evaluate outcomes.
7. Professionalism  
The ability to exhibit appropriate professional conduct and to represent the profession effectively (attitude, demeanor and appearance appropriate for health care setting).
8. Responsibility  
The ability to fulfill commitments and be accountable for actions and outcomes.
9. Critical Thinking  
The ability to question logically; identify, generate and evaluate elements of logical argument; recognize and differentiate facts, illusions, and assumptions; distinguish relevant from irrelevant information.
10. Stress Management  
The ability to identify sources of stress and to develop effective coping behaviors (ability to cope with illness, disability, pace, interactions, etc.).