Educating skilled, compassionate leaders in health care

ELON DPT

Doctor of Physical Therapy
ELON UNIVERSITY
Providing the tools for a higher standard of physical therapy

LEARN from cutting-edge faculty using an innovative curriculum.

PRACTICE what you learn in a variety of physical therapy settings.

HELP your patients face their challenges with courage and compassion.

For a relatively young profession, physical therapy has experienced an explosion of growth. More than 70 years ago when the physical therapy profession began in response to the world wars and polio epidemic, physical therapists earned a certificate with a few months of training. Today, expectations for physical therapists have risen dramatically, and, consequently, so has the demand for education.

When Elon enrolled its first PT class in 1998, the university offered a master’s degree — the most common degree available at the time. As the medical community endorsed the notion of PTs taking a more substantial role in the direct care of patients, the profession recommended that PT programs raise the bar and begin transitioning into doctoral-level education. Improving the quality of patient care continues to be the driving force behind the DPT. In 2003, Elon debuted a leading-edge DPT program that integrates dynamic classroom instruction with an impressive amount of hands-on clinical opportunities. The result is a program that ranked in the top 30 percent of all accredited DPT programs in its first year of eligibility (source: U.S. News & World Report).

A fully accredited program

The Doctor of Physical Therapy program at Elon University is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). In its initial review in 2000, the commission found no deficiencies in Elon’s program — a rare occurrence for any accreditation. The commission’s report called Elon’s physical therapy curriculum “unusually well developed” and its students “singularly equipped to join the physical therapy profession.”

Elon’s Doctor of Physical Therapy program is built on solid principles of science and research. At the same time, we recognize that a quality physical therapist is more than just a clinician. That’s why we are deliberate in our instruction of such values as compassion, listening, respect, organization and communication. The three-year, full-time program focuses on critical thinking, with an emphasis on treating the patient as a whole person with physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs.

Here are some key features of Elon’s DPT program:

**INNOVATIVE MODULAR CURRICULUM** Elon takes a bold departure from the traditional semester setting with its innovative modular curriculum. Unique to Elon, the DPT curriculum is carefully designed to build on a solid science foundation while integrating hands-on clinical practicums. Each module is made up of related courses, and the length of the modules – ranging from four to 16 weeks – is driven by course content. Core modules include a unique clinical seminar in which students practice their new skills in a mock clinical setting on campus, cementing the concepts they just learned in the classroom.

**EARLY CLINICAL EXPERIENCE** Elon’s DPT program includes 48 weeks of clinical practice — above the national average. Beginning the second year, students complete three eight-week clinical practicums at one of 300 patient-care settings in 34 states. The program culminates with a 24-week internship generally at select North and South Carolina facilities that have developed clinical and research partnerships with Elon.

**SMALL CLASSES** A class size of approximately 36 and a low student-to-faculty ratio allow DPT students to work closely with their professors. Elon faculty are noted as skilled and passionate teachers. Many students collaborate on research projects with their professors outside the classroom.

**ENGAGING COURSES** DPT courses are grounded in basic science, such as anatomy, physiology and biomechanics, along with more advanced study in areas such as differential diagnosis, pharmacology, radiology and imaging. Concepts are reinforced with hands-on applications. For example, in the psychosocial course, students use wheelchairs for two days to experience firsthand how limitations on their movement affect all aspects of their lives. In the Human Anatomy course, a tone of respect is set on day one. The cadaver lab is now called the human donor lab, and the donors are regarded as the students’ first patients. During the course, students work in small groups to develop detailed prosections on their human donor and present the information to their peers.

**LIFE-LONG LEARNING** Learning will not stop once a student’s degree is in hand. In order to stay at the top of their field throughout their careers, Elon students are taught how to critically evaluate and discuss scientific literature and review statistical data and experimental procedures. In addition, professors regularly collaborate with students on research. For example, Angela Richardson worked with Dr. Stephen Bailey to research ways to reduce the risk of developing pressure ulcers in patients using the TotalLift II Chair. She presented her findings at the North Carolina Physical Therapy Association meeting and won first prize in the student research competition. But more important, her findings have already impacted patient care at her internship site.

**PROVEN RESULTS** One of the best ways to measure a program’s success is to look at its graduates. At Elon, 96% of students passed the licensure exam, which is above the national average. In addition, 97% of enrolled students graduate from the program, and 100% find jobs after graduation (3-year averages).
Why I Chose Elon

Brittany Phillips
DPT—first year student

By the time Brittany Phillips graduates from the DPT program, Elon will have been her home for seven years. She would have it no other way. With an undergraduate degree from Elon in biology, she knows firsthand the university’s commitment to small classes and dedicated faculty.

“The faculty incorporate into class what will be clinically relevant later on,” she says. Brittany will move throughout the intensive three-year program with the same classmates, starting with a core six-month human anatomy class and ending with a six-month, full-time internship in a specialized clinical setting. Her class is made up of a variety of people at different life stages. “Having this dynamic adds to the class because everyone can bring a different viewpoint to the discussion.”

Brittany intends to work in the field of pediatrics. She finds inspiration in the enthusiasm that young children exhibit.

“All little kids want to do is get better and go out and play,” she says.

Brittany is looking forward to moving outside of the classroom when her second year practicums begin. She will work closely with physical therapy professionals in the field, but it won’t be the first time she works with a patient. Throughout her first year in the DPT program, Brittany has often worked with patients in the classroom. She and her classmates recently worked with a woman who had problems regaining strength in her wrist. They saw her for a month and were pleased with the outcome.

“You are able to see how the things you’re learning will really help a person,” she says. “It makes everything worthwhile.”

Brittany believes that word is spreading about the quality of Elon DPT students and graduates because of the wide-range of potential situations they are exposed to in the classroom and practicums.

“I’ve spoken with physical therapists who have worked with Elon students, and they say the students here are the most prepared coming out of school.”
Elon’s unique modular curriculum builds from one discipline to the next and liberally incorporates opportunities to immediately apply classroom knowledge in a clinical setting. Students learn all aspects of physical therapy, from traditional science, research and movement studies to communication skills, ethical responsibilities and the psychological effects of medical problems.

The DPT program is set up so that students go through the full-time, three-year program as a class, meaning the students you start with on day one are the same ones you’ll graduate with three years later. Competition to enroll in Elon’s DPT program increases each year. Hundreds of students apply for approximately 36 available openings in each class. The result is a group of highly motivated students who are eager to learn.

January start date
Graduates enter the job market at a different time than most schools — a valuable asset when seeking employment. The January start date allows students to have better access to clinical sites without continually competing with other programs. In addition, highly motivated students can complete an undergraduate degree in three-and-a-half years and enter the program immediately.

Sample module schedule

**YEAR ONE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module I (4 weeks)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychosocial Aspects of Health Care, Today’s Health Care Systems, Principles of Teaching and Learning, Human Anatomy I</td>
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<tr>
<th>Module II (12 weeks)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Anatomy I (continued), Human Physiology and Pathophysiology I, Physical Therapy Science I &amp; II, Research Design I, Clinical Seminar I</td>
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<tr>
<th>Module III (12 weeks)</th>
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<th>Module IV (16 weeks)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Biomechanics and Management of Musculoskeletal Dysfunction I-III, Clinical Seminar III, Clinical Imaging, Therapeutic Pharmacokinetics, Research Design II</td>
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**YEAR TWO**

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<tr>
<th>Module V (8 weeks)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Practicum I</td>
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<tr>
<th>Module VI (16 weeks)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neuroscience, Management of Neuromuscular Disorders, Clinical Seminar IV</td>
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<th>Module VII (8 weeks)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Practicum II</td>
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<th>Module VIII (8 weeks)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Practicum III</td>
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**YEAR THREE**

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<th>Module IX (12 weeks)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Principles of Electrotherapeutic Examination and Intervention, Physiology of Exercise, Management of Cardiopulmonary Dysfunction, Prosthetics and Orthotics, Directed Research I, Management of Integumentary Disorders</td>
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<table>
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<th>Module X (4 weeks)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Decision Making with Complex Patient (Client), Management of the Pediatric Client</td>
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<th>Module XI (4 weeks)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Principles of Administration and Management, Geriatric Health and Wellness</td>
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<th>Module XII (6 weeks)</th>
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<td>Advanced Clinical Practice Selective Tracks</td>
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<tr>
<th>Module XIII (24 weeks)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Internship, Directed Research II</td>
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<tr>
<th>Module XIV (1 week)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
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Chris Williams
DPT—second year student

Chris Williams was committed to finding the right DPT program for him. He was all set to apply to the program at another major university until he visited Elon for an open house. Impressed by the campus and the welcoming faculty, he was hooked. “My mind was made up,” he says. “I thought, ‘Where do I sign?’”

Chris believes that the DPT faculty is outstanding. He has been impressed by their real-world insight and emphasis on preparing students for their licensure exams. “Many of the professors in the program are currently practicing in the field,” he says. “They see what you need to know and because of that students practice what is applicable.”

Chris is passionate about helping others be active. He wants to work to help patients improve physical capability and to be relieved of constraints. “Giving people the freedom to live their lives is a powerful thing,” he says.

Chris has had the opportunity to apply what he has learned through practicums at an outpatient spine center facility in Asheville, N.C., and most recently at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, N.C. At Moses Cone, Chris worked with a 21-year-old patient who had been severely injured in a car accident. In those 12 weeks, he was able to see his patient’s progress. Following his experience, the patient wrote a letter to Chris, thanking him for his help. “The dots are starting to connect,” he says. “I look forward to seeing how much farther I can go.”
Elon DPT students enjoy direct access to the latest equipment and technology in the field. Vital to the university’s program is a successful partnership with Alamance Regional Medical Center (ARMC), a full-service hospital and health-care complex just minutes from campus. Elon and ARMC recently opened the new Center for Fitness & Human Movement Studies with the latest diagnostic and rehabilitation equipment. This center offers students and faculty unparalleled opportunities for study, direct patient therapy and evidence-based research.

The 4,300 square-foot Center for Fitness & Human Movement Studies features:

- Biomechanics Laboratory – used to study and treat abnormal gait in adult and pediatric patients as well as research the risk of injury during sports and exercise. Students work with a range of patients, including those with neurological disorders, foot problems due to diabetes or other foot disorders, and physical disabilities.
- Metabolic Testing Laboratory – used to evaluate aerobic fitness in patients and athletes.
- Vestibular Rehabilitation Center – used to evaluate and treat individuals who have balance disorders.
- Electrophysiology Laboratory – used to evaluate muscle and brain activity during therapy and sports activities.
On campus, the Department of Physical Therapy is housed in the fully equipped McMichael Science Center, which features three skills laboratories – two that are set up as musculoskeletal clinics and one as a rehabilitation area.

Elon’s modern lab equipment simulates a professional physical therapy clinic. Students gain confidence using the most up-to-date tools of the trade, including an electromyography system for diagnosing neuromuscular disorders, an electrocardiograph to detect and diagnose heart abnormalities and an electronic ergometer to measure how hard muscles are working. Students and faculty have access to the latest in classroom and lab technology, including laptops, tablet PCs, digital video cameras and PRS, an interactive Personal Response System that instantly records student responses.
Not only are Elon professors exceptionally well qualified, they love to teach. Classes and labs are small, so students have uncommon access to the faculty.

Elon’s DPT faculty includes experienced, board-certified specialists in three key areas of the profession: neurology, orthopedics and geriatrics. More than 90% of the full-time faculty hold doctoral degrees. They have doctorates in fields such as exercise science, human movement, physical education and biomedical engineering as well as adult education and health-care management. Their research interests cover a wide range of topics, including how children and adolescents with neurological impairments respond to exercise, the effects of fatigue on brain activity and the long-term effects of strokes.

In addition, most faculty members maintain clinical practices, helping them stay current in their fields. Several hold national or state leadership positions in the American Physical Therapy Association.

“A faculty, we’re diverse in our areas of expertise and our teaching styles, but we’re unified in our commitment to students. We care about their success not only academically, but as people, too. We know they will be our peers one day, and we want the best possible people in this profession.”

Charity Johansson, PT, Ph.D., GCS
Professor of Physical Therapy

A core of experienced, full-time faculty provide the foundation of Elon’s DPT program.

Dr. Elizabeth Rogers, associate dean/chairperson, Department of Physical Therapy Education
Expertise: founded Elon’s physical therapy program; founded physical therapy program at Western University Health Sciences in Pomona, Calif.; clinical rehabilitation experience
Research interests: admissions criteria and success on licensure exam, study of curriculum models of physical therapy education

Dr. Bill Andrews, assistant professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: neurologic certified specialist, maintains clinical practice in neurologic rehabilitation
Research interests: long-term functioning and strength in stroke patients

Dr. Stephen Bailey, associate professor of physical therapy education; director, Center for Fitness & Human Movement Studies at Alamance Regional Medical Center
Clinical expertise: cardiopulmonary physical therapy, named a Fellow in the American College of Sports Medicine
Research interests: impact of exercise and fatigue on cognitive function, nutritional and physical fitness needs of local Hispanic community

Dr. Kyndall Boyle, assistant professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: orthopedic certified specialist; inpatient, outpatient and home health-care settings
Research interests: comparison of different approaches to musculoskeletal physical therapy interventions

Dr. Susan Chinworth, associate professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: musculoskeletal physical therapy, manual therapy, biomechanical qualitative analysis of movement patterns
Research interests: applied biomechanics of exercise techniques

Janet Cope, assistant professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: occupational therapist, clinical anatomist, anthropologist; skeletal pathology, disorders of the musculoskeletal system
Research interests: examination and interventions for patients with upper extremity injuries

Dr. Steve Folger, associate professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: neuroscience
Research interests: effects of fatigue on brain activity, technology applications for teaching and research

Dr. Jane Freund, assistant professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: neurologic certified specialist, maintains current practice in vestibular rehabilitation
Research interests: abdominal muscle function in patients with strokes

Dr. Marianne Janssen, director of clinical education
Clinical expertise: certified athletic trainer, physical therapist
Program expertise: instructional technology, distance education, evidence-based practice in developing clinical experiences for DPT students
Dr. Charity Johansson, professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: geriatric certified specialist
Research interests: psychosocial aspects of health care such as patients’ responses to illness; providing health care to underserved populations locally and around the world.

Dr. Cynthia Lewis, associate professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: pediatric physical therapy, spinal mobilization
Research interests: exercise response in children and adolescents with neurological impairments

Dr. Deborah Stetts, assistant professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: orthopedic certified specialist, Fellow in the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists
Research interests: abdominal muscle function in patients with strokes

Elon’s part-time professors complement the full-time faculty with their varied clinical experiences.

Robert Bartlett
Expertise: Fellow in the American Physical Therapy Association, former president of APTA, professor emeritus at Duke University

Dr. Carrie Brice
Clinical expertise: certified lymphedema specialist, musculoskeletal and neurologic arenas. Clinical coordinator at Alamance Regional Medical Center for outpatient and off-site clinics

Dr. Gray Carpenter
Clinical expertise: musculoskeletal issues; received the 2006 North Carolina Excellence in Clinical Practice Award; certified in orthopedic manual therapy

Dr. Gail Deyle

Dr. Kirsten Folger
Clinical expertise: children with special needs

Dr. Michelle Fritsch
Expertise: licensed pharmacist, certified geriatric pharmacist

Paula Hudson
Clinical expertise: maintains private practice focusing on pediatric clients; works in neonatal intensive care unit in Raleigh

Lisa Pennington
Expertise: certified in speech-language pathology; director of rehabilitation, lifestyle and employee services at Alamance Regional Medical Center

Dr. Robin Scerbo
Clinical expertise: clients with amputations, including those with diabetes; orthotics

The American Physical Therapy Association’s new vision, in which patients will have direct access to physical therapy by 2020, means PTs face the highest level of education ever required for the profession. I firmly believe our graduates will be more than ready to embrace this new role. Elon has a well-established tradition of graduating PTs who are compassionate, skilled and confident.
The Elon DPT program enrolls cohorts each January. Applications are evaluated on a rolling basis throughout the year. Please submit all required application materials as early as possible prior to enrollment.

For a complete list of requirements and additional admissions information, refer to the graduate catalog or visit www.elon.edu/dpt.

**DPT Admission Checklist**

1. Complete the application form. (Apply online at www.elon.edu/dpt.)
2. Send official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended.
3. Submit official GRE scores.

**Financial assistance available**

Students accepted to the Doctor of Physical Therapy program have several options for financial aid. Each year, Elon awards three scholarships of $6,000 (over three years) based on academic performance, interviews and potential contribution to the field of physical therapy.

Federal loans are available, including the Stafford Loan and the unsubsidized Stafford Loan, which provide up to $20,500 per year. The Graduate Plus federal loan covers up to the cost of attendance, including living expenses. North Carolina residents can apply to the College Fund of North Carolina for up to $8,500 per year. The loan is forgiven for every year the student works in the state following graduation.

**Total Students**

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**Academic Background**

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<tr>
<td>Average GPA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Science GPA</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average GRE (V+Q)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average GRE Analytical Writing</td>
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**Personal Background**

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<tr>
<td>Average Age</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>71%</td>
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**States Represented**

(Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, Wisconsin)

|                              | 13  |

**First/Undergraduate Degree**

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<tr>
<td>Exercise &amp; Health Science</td>
<td>53%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sports Medicine/Athletic Training</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13%</td>
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Rich Tenney  
DPT — third year student

As a third year DPT student, the professional world is on the horizon for Rich Tenney. In order to prepare for his impending career, Rich is immersed in his six-month internship in the field. Rich’s internship has allowed him to rotate between acute inpatient and orthopedic outpatient therapy. It has also allowed him to think outside the box.

During these six months, he has not only participated in the treatment of patients, but he also completed a case report and a service learning project that provided pro bono consultation to an organization that employs individuals with disabilities.

During his time in the DPT program, Rich has had the opportunity to take coursework related to pediatrics, geriatrics and prosthetics. He feels his coursework has given him a wide-range view of the physical therapy field and also instilled a great deal of confidence in him prior to his internship.

Rich says he’s excited about the progressive vision of the physical therapy field. He is entering the field as a second career after working as a high school teacher.

“I decided to change careers because of my interest in the human body and the joy that I receive in assisting others in improving their quality of life,” he explains.

An Arizona native, Rich had to move his wife, Tami, and their two children across the country to participate in the Elon DPT. He believes that they made an excellent decision.

“We love the great location of Elon in its proximity to the ocean and the mountains,” he says. “It’s a wonderful place to raise a family.”

Rich is looking forward to graduation and the culmination of his DPT experience. He feels the DPT program provided him with a solid foundation in preparation of his licensure exam. He intends on specializing in orthopedics and geriatrics, and the future looks bright.

“I had several job opportunities and offers prior to completing my internship,” he says. “This is a great time to be entering physical therapy.”
In its first year of eligibility, Elon's DPT program placed among the top 30 percent of the nation's accredited physical therapy programs in the latest U.S. News & World Report “America’s Best Graduate Schools” guide.

Physical Therapy named top career choice

Wall Street Journal's executive career site, CareerJournal.com, recently named physical therapy as one of eight “Best Careers.” The information is based on job satisfaction, intellectual stimulation and job security among other factors. In addition, CNNMoney.com ranked physical therapist #12 on its list of best jobs based on salary and job prospects.
WHY I CHOSE ELON

Lana Cox Johnson
DPT 2005 graduate

As a recent graduate of the Elon DPT program, Lana Cox Johnson’s admiration of the program is evident. She is currently working as a staff physical therapist at Randolph Hospital in Asheboro, N.C. Lana is eager to share what she has learned from the program in her professional environment.

“I find myself educating fellow clinicians about the value of the DPT,” she says.

What strikes Lana most about Elon is its close-knit community where students are known by name and not as a number. She feels the DPT program’s curriculum fully prepares students to enter the field of physical therapy.

“With 12 months of clinical experience in a three-year program, you come out ready,” she says.

During her time in the program, Lana was introduced to virtually all areas in the field of physical therapy. She was also given the chance to work with a variety of age groups. Both of these factors have aided Lana in her professional life. She has worked with patients ranging from 3-years-old to 103-years-old. She has worked in the areas of neurological and orthopedic therapy as well as wound care. Within three weeks of graduating from the program, Lana had a full caseload.

“The DPT program allowed me to head full-force into the field,” she says. “Being a graduate of Elon has opened doors.”
START DATE
January

PROGRAM LENGTH
3 years

PROGRAM TYPE
Full-time

CURRICULUM
Modular

CLINICAL PRACTICE
48 weeks

FULL-TIME FACULTY
13

PROGRAM FOUNDED
1997

AVERAGE STUDENT AGE
23

AVERAGE GPA
3.5

AVERAGE GRE (V+Q)
1080