College of Health and Professional Studies
School of Physical Therapy **Abstract No. PT-5**

STRENGTHENING INTRAPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: OUTCOMES FROM STUDENT-LED DPT/PTA WORKSHOPS GROUNDED IN IPEC COMPETENCIES

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Background & Purpose:
Education on the collaborative relationship between Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) and physical therapist assistants (PTA) remains limited despite its recognized importance (Sellheim et al., 2020). This gap is particularly important given evidence that PT/PTA collaborative models yield patient outcomes comparable to PT-only care, while facilitating more efficient discharge (Baumann et al., 2023). Prior research indicates that team-based learning enhances student comfort with collaboration and emphasizes the need for improved role clarity and intentional curricular integration (Hawthorne et al., 2018; Hayward et al., 2021). This study evaluated the impact of student-led workshops on PT and PTA students' understanding of roles, communication, and teamwork, while also exploring strategies for integrating intraprofessional education into entry-level curricula aligned with accreditation standards.
Description:
DPT students designed and facilitated two workshops for DPT and PTA students. A literature review and a clinician informed needs assessment identified the key themes of collaboration, role clarity, and communication. The Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Core Competencies guided the content. Workshops included didactic sessions on roles, ethics, patient simulations, anatomy dissections, and team-building activities. Pre- and post-surveys assessed understanding of roles and collaboration, with satisfaction surveys evaluating perceived value.
Results:
A total of 160 participants (113 DPT, 47 PTA) engaged in the workshops. Quantitative analysis showed improvements across all measured domains. Median scores rose from 3 pre-workshop to 4 post-workshop for preparedness, role understanding, communication, delegation, and readiness for collaboration. Mann-Whitney U tests confirmed these gains were statistically significant ($p < .05$). Participants cited simulations as most impactful for understanding roles and communication, and dissections for fostering teamwork. Suggestions included extending activities and adding more complex cases.
Conclusion:
Findings support structured, student-led intraprofessional education as an effective method to enhance PT/PTA collaboration. Integrating such models into entry-level curricula may improve role clarity, teamwork, and readiness for team-based care.