
PHYT 8901 - Clinical Decision Making 1

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 01, CRN 41666,

Credit hours: 6

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Course Description

8901. Clinical Decision Making 1. Decision-making process for clinical management of uncomplicated cases in practice patterns. Emphasis on posture and movement assessment, safety, body mechanics, and monitoring physiological status. The course includes integrated hands on practice into lectures and class sessions.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Physical Therapy 6th Edition	Frownfelter, D	9780323624718
Required	Acute Care Handbook for Physical Therapists 6th Edition	Panasci, K	9780443116056
Required	Physical Rehabilitation 8th Edition	O'Sullivan, S.B.	9781719646918
Required	Writing Patient/Client Notes 5th Edition	Kettenbach, G	9780803638204
Required	Text and Atlas of Wound Diagnosis and Treatment 3rd Edition	Hamm, RL	9781264923106
Required	Mobility in Context: Principles of Patient Care Skills 3rd Edition	Johnsson, C	9781719642866

Required	Therapeutic Exercise: Foundations and Techniques 8th Edition	Kisner, C	9781719640473
Required	Neurological Rehabilitation: Neuroscience and Neuroplasticity 2nd Edition	Nichols-Larsen, DS	9781260461398
Required	Therapeutic Modalities in Rehabilitation 6th Edition	Prentice, WE	9781264264551
Optional	ACSM's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription 12th Edition	Ozemek, C	9781975219208
Required	Guide to Physical Therapist Practice, 3.0	American Physical Therapy Association	Online
Optional	Differential Diagnosis for Physical Therapists: Screening for Referral 6th Edition	Goodman, CC	9780323478496

The following are a list of publications that are used in the course as supplementary reading material. These publications are not textbooks but are research articles published on select topics to help augment current textbook readings.

1. Sizer PS Jr, Brismée JM, Cook C. Medical screening for red flags in the diagnosis and management of musculoskeletal spine pain. *Pain Pract.* 2007;7(1):53-71. doi:10.1111/j.1533-2500.2007.00112.x
2. Murphy DR, Hurwitz EL. A theoretical model for the development of a diagnosis-based clinical decision rule for the management of patients with spinal pain. *BMC Musculoskelet Disord.* 2007;8:75. Published 2007 Aug 3. doi:10.1186/1471-2474-8-75.
3. ATS Committee on Proficiency Standards for Clinical Pulmonary Function Laboratories. ATS statement: guidelines for the six-minute walk test. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med.* 2002;166(1):111-117. doi:10.1164/ajrccm.166.1.at1102.
4. Hillegass E, Lukaszewicz K, Puthoff M. Role of Physical Therapists in the Management of Individuals at Risk for or Diagnosed With Venous Thromboembolism: Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guideline 2022. *Phys Ther.* 2022;102(8):pzac057. doi:10.1093/ptj/pzac057.
5. Murdock, K., & Ciesla, N. (1999). Lines, Tubes, Catheters, and Physiologic Monitoring in the ICU. *Cardiopulmonary Physical Therapy Journal*, 11(1), 16–25.
6. Page P. Making the Case for Modalities: The Need for Critical Thinking in Practice. *Int J Sports Phys Ther.* 2021;16(5):28326. Published 2021 Oct 1. doi:10.26603/001c.28326.
7. Smith, B. A., Fields, C. J., & Fernandez, N. (2010). Physical therapists make accurate and appropriate discharge recommendations for patients who are acutely ill. *Physical Therapy*, 90(5), 693–703. <https://doi.org/10.2522/ptj.20090164>

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Clinical Decision Making I Content Schedule

Day	Date	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
Mon	8/24	Guide to Physical Therapy Practice Ch 2 and 3 O'Sullivan Textbook Ch 1 and 4 Kettenbach Textbook Ch 11, 12	Course Information/Syllabus Principles of Decision Making Overview and Roles of Healthcare Team Members Subjective Exam: Medical Screening and Patient History	
Wed	8/26	Murphy and Hurwitz Article Sizer Article	Subjective Exam: Patient History, Review of Systems, and Systems Review	
Mon	8/31	Kettenbach Textbook Ch 7	Principles of General Documentation: Evaluation and Treatment	
Wed	9/2	Nichols-Larsen Textbook Ch 10	General Principles of Neurological Evaluation	Quiz #1
Mon	9/7	No Class		
Wed	9/9	No new readings	General Principles of Neurological Intervention	



Mon	9/14	Hamm Textbook Ch 3 Goodman Textbook Ch 4	General Principles of Integumentary Assessment: wounds, skin review and assessment, volumetric and circumferential measurement, and monofilament lab	
Wed	9/16	Frownfelter Textbook Ch 18 ATS Statement: Guidelines for 6 minute Walk Test ACSM Guidelines For Exercise Testing: Skim Ch 1-5	General Principles of Exercise Testing and Training	
Mon	9/21	Frownfelter Textbook Ch 6, 13, 14	General Principles of Cardiopulmonary Assessment and Evaluation General Overview of Cardiopulmonary Medications	Quiz #2
Wed	9/23	Frownfelter Textbook Ch 15, 16, 25	General Principles of Cardiopulmonary Intervention	Skill Checkoff #1 Due
Mon	9/28	Panasci Textbook Ch 1, 2, 18, 19 (Reference Only) Frownfelter Textbook: Ch 19 Johannson Textbook: Ch 3, 4 Murdock Article	Foundations of Acute Care Decision Making Safety, Medical Monitoring, Patient Preparation in Acute Care Decision Making	Examination #1
Wed	9/30	Panasci Textbook: Ch 19, 22 Johansson Textbook: Ch 13 Hillegass Article	Examination of the Acute Care Patient Wheelchair Equipment and Mobility in Acute Care	
Mon	10/5	Johannson Textbook: Ch 6, 7, 10	Principles of Bed Mobility, Draping, and Positioning in Acute Care with Case Based Application	Quiz #3
Wed	10/7	Johansson Textbook: Ch 2, 8, 11, 12	Principles of Transferring and Body Mechanics with Case Based Applications	
Mon	10/12	Johansson Textbook: Ch 14, 15	Principles of Gait Training and Assistive Devices	
Wed	10/14	Smith Article	Care Transitions and Integrated Clinical Management of the Acute Care Patient Integrated Acute Care Clinical Decision Making: Inpatient Lab Case Simulations	
Mon	10/19	O'Sullivan Textbook: Ch 7 - Tables on Rancho Gait Terminology and Deviations	Assessment of Gait and Abnormal Gait Patterns	Skill Checkoff #2 Due
Wed	10/21	No New Readings	Acute Care Practicals	Acute Care Practical Documentation Due
Mon	10/26	O'Sullivan Textbook: Ch 30	Basic Principles of Orthotic Management	Examination #2
Wed	10/28	Page Article Prentice Textbook: Ch 1, 2, 3, 4, 16	Introduction to Modalities: Principles of Pain, Inflammation, and Treatment Mechanical Energy Modalities: Massage and Soft Tissue Mobilization	
Mon	11/2	Prentice Textbook: Ch 14, 15, and 17	Principles of Mechanical Energy Modalities: Traction, Intermittent Pneumatic Compression, Vibration	
Wed	11/4	Prentice Textbook: Ch 9, 12, and 13	Principles of Electromagnetic Energy Modalities: Laser, UV, and Diathermy Principles of Thermal Energy Modalities: Cryotherapy and Thermotherapy	Quiz #4
Mon	11/9	Prentice Textbook: Ch 5 and 11	Principles of Sound Energy Modalities: US Principles of Electrical Energy Modalities: HVPC, TENS, IFC	
Wed	11/11	No New Readings	Principles of Orthopedic Screening - Anthropometrics/Posture/Movement. CLASS MOVED TO 11/13	
Mon	11/16	O'Sullivan Textbook: Ch 4	Principles of Musculoskeletal Examination	

Wed	11/18	Kisner Textbook: Ch 1-6	Principles of Musculoskeletal Intervention: Quiz #5 Exercise Prescription and Taping
Mon	11/23	No new readings	Clinical Reasoning and Decision Making in Musculoskeletal Evaluation and Treatment Skill Checkoff #3 Due
Wed	11/25	No Class	
Mon	11/30	No New Readings	Integrated Outpatient Patient Management: Outpatient Case Simulations
Wed	12/2	No New Readings No New Readings	Integrated Outpatient Patient Management: Final Practical Documentation Due Outpatient Case Simulations Final Outpatient Practical

The course schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better learning.