

Candidate Bio and Statement – 2026

The information below was provided by each candidate in response to a request to provide a brief bio and statement of interest and qualifications for the position.

Name: Andrea Bowens, PT, DPT, PhD, OCS

Title: Associate Professor

Candidate for: ACAPT - Institute for Academic Advancement Vice Chair

Brief Bio

Andrea Bowens is an Associate Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She earned her bachelor's in health sciences and a Doctorate in Physical Therapy (DPT) from the University of Florida. Dr. Bowens obtained her Ph.D. in Higher Educational Leadership from Mercer University. Her clinical experience in outpatient orthopedics and sports medicine has enriched her teaching in DPT programs' musculoskeletal, diagnostic imaging, and clinical reasoning courses over the past 11 years. Her scholarly work includes evidence-based teaching practices, workforce burnout, and admissions and retention efforts that strengthen access and representation of students from varying backgrounds.

Dr. Bowens has significant national service and leadership experience through her work with the APTA and ACAPT. As a Chief Delegate to the APTA House of Delegates, she has collaborated with national leaders and helped shape positions and governance decisions. As a board member of APTA Alabama, she has assisted with state advocacy efforts, membership engagement, and communicated House activities within the chapter. Within ACAPT, Dr. Bowens has chaired the Task Force on Best Practices in Admissions and Retention, working with internal and external stakeholders to complete impactful work for the academic community.

Candidate statement for Board position: My recent leadership experiences demonstrate a strong ability to build relationships, collaborate effectively, and follow through on commitments to advance the physical therapy profession. For the past six years, I have served as Chief Delegate for the Alabama Chapter to the APTA House of Delegates. In 2025, I partnered with interested parties and multiple delegations to craft and successfully pass amended language clarifying the physical therapist's role in mental and behavioral health. My leadership within the House has also included serving as the leader of the Southern Regional Caucus, facilitating small-group discussions, and being part of a small team to develop the roles and functions of the new Chief Delegate Council. All these roles have required organization, effective communication, and mentorship to prepare for participation in governance activities.

Since 2024, I have chaired the Best Practices in Admissions & Retention at DPT Programs Task Force. As Chair, I have collaborated with ACAPT Institute for Academic Advancement leadership, ACAPT staff, Board members, and Center for Excellence leadership. This role exemplifies my servant leadership style by building strong relationships, addressing challenges, maintaining follow-through, and unifying our efforts around shared long-term goals.

Experience

Candidates were asked to rate their experience with the following criteria. (Developing): no experience, (Proficient): some courses/experience, (Advanced): fully competent with experience and educational courses. Candidates were also requested to identify examples to support their rating.

Advocacy (includes personal, professional, social, community, and patient advocacy): Proficient; My advocacy experience spans state, national, and institutional levels, reflecting my ongoing commitment to advancing the physical therapy profession and supporting those we serve. At the state level, I have participated in multiple advocacy days at our state capitol to promote changes to the practice act and to articulate the value of our profession in addressing the health care needs in our state. Nationally, I attended APTA Capitol Hill Day, engaging with congressional offices to promote federal policies that strengthen access to physical therapy and improve payment for our services. My leadership within the APTA House of Delegates further demonstrates my experience in professional advocacy, as I collaborate with members at the state and national levels to shape policy and ensure our profession's positions align with current and future needs.

Analytical Skills: Proficient; I consider analytical skills one of my strengths. As part of my dissertation on DPT program admissions, I conducted a systematic review of the literature on cognitive and non-cognitive variables in DPT program admissions, resulting in two publications synthesizing findings from almost 40 studies. Further, I designed and published a study of predictors of DPT program admission using a large national dataset of over 17,000 applicants. These scholarly works required significant analysis and synthesis of current literature and national organization documents, detailed data cleaning, statistical modeling to best match the research questions, and interpretation of findings that would meaningfully inform admissions policies and practices.

My service on the university assessment and accreditation committee and the preparation of Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) re-accreditation documents serve as additional examples of my strong analytical skills. In these roles, I evaluated accreditation requirements from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and CAPTE, identifying the data needed to show compliance with each standard and objective. Specifically, when writing the former CAPTE standard 2B narratives, I analyzed program data, synthesized findings, and drew conclusions about why we observed what we did and what these findings mean for future program improvements.

Effective Communication & Public Speaking: Advancing; I have strong public speaking experience with national, state, and academic audiences. I have presented at multiple poster, platform, and educational sessions at the APTA Combined Sections Meeting, including our recent task force work on admissions and retention. I have also spoken at the APTA Alabama Annual Conference, the Education Leadership Conference, and participated on a speaker panel at local interprofessional events. Finally, I regularly deliver lectures in my faculty teaching role within the DPT program. These experiences demonstrate my ability to communicate with diverse groups and deliver organized, engaging presentations.

Skills to address the ACAPT strategic Initiatives: Advanced; I aim to promote the new ACAPT strategic plan initiatives within the Institute for Academic Advancement (IAA) through data-informed, collaborative leadership. The IAA can be uniquely positioned to support the strategic initiatives of Academic Excellence and Leadership and Influence. The Institute can serve as a catalyst for promoting best practices, elevating program innovations, and hosting webinars or workshops to develop the next generation of academic leaders. For Data for Impact, I want to triangulate existing ACAPT data, membership feedback, and insights from the ACAPT Board and staff to guide the development of initiatives that reflect member priorities and address emerging needs of DPT and PTA education programs.

I also believe the IAA can play an important role in promoting the Connected and Engaged Community initiative. For example, the IAA could host a "Learning from

Leaders” webinar series to promote peer learning among current and future leaders. IAA can also facilitate online community discussions that provide a space for collaborative problem-solving, resource sharing, and feedback that informs IAA-led resource development or task force creation. Ultimately, IAA activities and initiatives that bring member value and drive engagement will support the Organizational Vitality initiative.

Skill Set Evaluation

Candidates were asked to rate the following attributes on a scale of 1–5 and identify the top three in each category that best reflect their individual strengths.

<p>STRATEGIC THINKING 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflective - Alignment with long-term goals - Analytical 	<p>RELATIONSHIP BUILDING 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear communication - Data-driven - Authentic 	<p>INFLUENCING 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborative - Strong listener - Establishes rapport & trust 	<p>EXECUTING 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reliable, - Organized - High standards
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Candidate Bio and Statement – 2026

The information below was provided by each candidate in response to a request to provide a brief bio and statement of interest and qualifications for the position.

Name: Monica A. Nelsen, PT, DPT

Title: Adjunct Associate Professor

Candidate for: ACAPT - Institute for Academic Advancement Vice Chair

Brief Bio

My career as a physical therapist has taken me in multiple, diverse yet complementary directions: clinically, with a focus on medical complexity and neurological conditions; research, leading an NIH-funded, multi-site RCT; the legal sector, with emphases on health literacy and patient advocacy; and as core faculty in DPT education, with broad ranging administrative roles, including hybrid development, admissions, curriculum development, faculty and student mentorship, student success, and ensuring institutional academic integrity.

Candidate statement for Board position: In my varied work environments, I have illustrated the value of physical therapy to patients and their family members, interprofessional colleagues, DPT and other health professional students, insurance adjusters, and healthcare administrators. Most recently, I was able to carry this work forward as Vice Chair of ACAPT's Value Proposition Task Force. I am excited to see the new direction that IAA is taking, particularly with respect to fostering cross-institutional collaboration and mentored pathways for leadership development as vehicles for driving excellence in academic physical therapy and developing tangible solutions within the profession. I welcome an opportunity to serve this mission.

Experience

Candidates were asked to rate their experience with the following criteria. (Developing): no experience, (Proficient): some courses/experience, (Advanced): fully competent with experience and educational courses. Candidates were also requested to identify examples to support their rating.

Advocacy (includes personal, professional, social, community, and patient advocacy): Advanced; Empowering patients to understand their health and steer their own health decisions is an aspect of advocacy that brings me joy in clinical and research environments. My work in legal settings has always been with an eye towards individual client advocacy as well as systemic social justice. In these experiences, I have conducted focus groups; performed legal research; drafted briefs and other legal documents; provided trial and jury consultation; and participated in mediations, settlement conferences, depositions, client & witness preparation, discovery and investigation.

Analytical Skills: Advanced; Logic drives me towards optimism, guided by the belief that there is always an opportunity for improvement, aka a solution! Logic and creativity work symbiotically in this regard. the solution is often in finding novel ways to examine data, information, circumstances, etc. I employ analytical skills everyday to find solutions in my own work and personal life as well as in guiding students and colleagues through thoughtful assessment, decision making, action, and reassessment - analgous to the clinical reasoning of a PT. My analytical skills have governed my work in clinical research, particularly in assuring data quality via identification of methods to ensure assessor reliability and consistency and intervention fidelity and logic and analysis have also driven my approach to desinging physiology and pathophysiology course content with logical integrated concept scaffolding.

Effective Communication & Public Speaking: Advancing; My strengths (and admittedly comfort) are in small group discussions and written/visual communications, yet I have demonstrated efficacy preparing information and speaking to large audiences, particularly with interprofessional backgrounds as encountered in my work in clinical research, legal/advocacy settings, and across institutional departments.

Skills to address the ACAPT strategic Initiatives: Advanced; As Vice Chair for ACAPT's Value Prop task force, I frequently revisited the mission and objectives outlined for us by ACAPT leadership, and reoriented our group to them as needed. Similarly, in working within my own institution, I revisit our mission and values often as a framework for leading others and grounding my own work. I would utilize a similar approach within IAA, aided by the tremendous effort that went into the preparation of the SOP.

Skill Set Evaluation

Candidates were asked to rate the following attributes on a scale of 1–5 and identify the top three in each category that best reflect their individual strengths.

STRATEGIC THINKING 3	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING 3	INFLUENCING 3	EXECUTING 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Informed (diverse perspectives are essential)- Creative- Courageous	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Connection- Advocacy and empowerment- Team building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Curiosity- Compassion- Self-reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mission-guided w/ pre-identified goals and sub-goals- Mental flexibility- Collaborative