

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: Amy E Heath, PT, DPT, PhD

Title: Chair, Department of Physical Therapy & Director, Doctor of Physical Therapy Program

Candidate for: ACAPT - Board of Director Treasurer

Brief Bio

Dr. Amy E. Heath, PT, DPT, PhD, is an accomplished educator, researcher, and academic leader dedicated to advancing excellence in physical therapist education. She currently serves as Chair and Program Director of the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at Western Michigan University, where she is also a tenured Associate Professor. With more than two decades of experience in higher education, Dr. Heath's work centers on learning theories related to professional education, inclusive admissions practices, and program quality assessment.

Dr. Heath has authored numerous peer-reviewed publications and presents regularly at national conferences. Dr. Heath has been deeply engaged in professional service, including her role as Treasurer of the American Council of Academic Physical Therapy (2023- 2026), service on the ACAPT Finance Committee (2018-2019) and the ACAPT Benchmarking Excellence Task Force (2013-current) which produced the PT-Measure of Educational Program Quality.

Her academic career spans previous faculty and leadership appointments at Simmons University and Temple University, complemented by extensive service on university, college, and departmental committees. Committed to developing future leaders in physical therapy, Dr. Heath integrates evidence-based teaching, data-driven decision-making, and a strong emphasis on equity and student development into all aspects of her work.

Candidate statement for Board position: I am honored to be considered for the role of Treasurer. Throughout my career, I have demonstrated a strong commitment to responsible stewardship, transparent decision making, and data informed leadership—values that align directly with the responsibilities of this position.

As Chair and Program Director of the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at Western Michigan University, I manage complex budgets, oversee resource allocation, and support strategic financial planning to ensure program sustainability and growth. My service as Treasurer on the Executive Committee of the American Council of Academic Physical Therapy has further strengthened my ability to interpret financial reports, guide fiscal policy, and communicate financial implications clearly to diverse stakeholders.

I believe that effective financial leadership requires both precision and collaboration. I view the Treasurer's role not only as maintaining accurate records, but as helping the organization make informed decisions that advance its mission and serve its membership. I am committed to accountability, clarity, and long-term financial health, and I bring experience navigating financial processes with integrity and consistency.

If elected, I will continue to promote transparency, strengthen financial systems, and ensure that our resources are used strategically to support innovation, equity, and the evolving needs of our community.

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 both professional and educational communities, with a focus on promoting excellence, equity, and informed policy within physical therapist education. As Treasurer and Executive Committee member of ACAPT, I contribute to national advocacy efforts that influence accreditation standards, educational policy, student loan policy, and the future of the physical therapy workforce. Moreover, I previously served on and have served as the liaison to ACAPT's Advocacy Committee for Physical Therapist Education.

At the institutional level, I advocate for students through committee service, curricular improvements, and efforts to ensure inclusive and supportive learning environments. My research also serves as a form of advocacy—addressing issues such as equitable admissions to inform policy and support students' long term professional outcomes. I believe advocacy occurs both through public action and systematic change, and I am committed to using evidence, collaboration, and strategic influence to support the profession and its learners.

Analytical Skills: Advanced; I consistently apply strong analytical skills in my leadership, research, and program evaluation work. As Chair and Program Director, I routinely analyze complex data sets—including admissions metrics, student performance trends, and programmatic outcomes—to guide decision making and continuous quality improvement. For example, my research on predictors of academic difficulty in DPT programs required integrating demographic, admissions, and performance data to identify meaningful patterns that inform equitable and evidence based admissions processes. Similarly, my work exploring self regulated learning and student debt management demonstrates my ability to synthesize quantitative and qualitative findings, translate results into actionable recommendations, and communicate implications to faculty, administrators, and external audiences.

Beyond research, I employ analytical reasoning in budget oversight, strategic planning, and accreditation readiness. I have created data-informed dashboards for curriculum assessment, guided faculty in interpreting learning outcomes, and contributed to national benchmarking initiatives through ACAPT's Benchmarking Excellence Task Force. These activities reflect my commitment to using data not only to diagnose problems, but to drive sustainable, mission aligned solutions.

Business Experience: Proficient; My business experience is grounded in leading academic programs, managing operational systems, and aligning organizational resources with strategic priorities. As Chair and Program Director of a DPT program, I oversee staffing structures, workflow processes, enrollment management, and strategic planning to ensure long term program sustainability. I routinely collaborate with university administration on budgeting, resource allocation, marketing strategies, and operational efficiencies. This includes directing program initiatives, coordinating accreditation processes, and managing partnerships with clinical sites and external organizations—experiences that mirror many core business leadership responsibilities.

I also apply business principles through process improvement and system modernization efforts. For example, I have led initiatives to streamline assessment procedures, enhance onboarding and training structures, and improve communication systems within programs and committees. These experiences highlight my ability to manage organizational change, strengthen internal operations, and support the broader institutional mission through effective planning and execution.

Effective Communication & Public Speaking: Advancing; I have extensive public speaking experience across national, regional, and institutional platforms. Over the past decade, I have presented numerous peer reviewed education sessions, workshops, and platform presentations at major conferences such as the APTA Education Leadership Conference, APTA Combined Sections Meeting, and the Indiana University's Assessment Institute. These presentations have covered topics including learning strategies, admissions practices, program assessment, and leadership development, allowing me to engage audiences ranging from educators and researchers to clinicians and policymakers.

In addition to national presentations, in my role as ACAPT Treasurer, I have presented and annual Treasurer's Report at ELC for the past 3 years and frequently speak within my institution, leading faculty development sessions, student seminars, curriculum reviews, and stakeholder meetings. My communication style emphasizes clarity, engagement, and accessibility, and I have experience facilitating discussions, moderating panels, and guiding groups through data driven decision-making processes. This breadth of experience supports my ability to represent organizations effectively and communicate complex ideas in meaningful, audience specific ways.

Financial Experience: Advanced; I have extensive financial experience through my roles overseeing academic budgets, managing program expenditures, and participating in high level fiscal decision making. As Chair and Program Director, I am responsible for budget planning, monitoring spending, forecasting future financial needs, and ensuring responsible stewardship of institutional funds. This includes managing faculty lines, operational budgets, curricular resources, and long term financial planning to support program growth and stability. I also interpret financial reports, evaluate budget requests, and communicate financial implications to leadership and stakeholders.

At the national level, my service as Treasurer on the ACAPT Executive Committee enables me to engage directly in organizational budgeting, financial policy development, and fiscal oversight of a multi million dollar association. In this role, I work with auditors, review investment strategies, ensure compliance with financial controls, and help guide short and long term financial planning. These responsibilities have strengthened my ability to maintain accountability, promote transparency, and support mission aligned financial decision making.

Skills to address the ACAPT strategic Initiatives: Advanced; My leadership philosophy is deeply aligned with strategic initiatives that emphasize educational excellence, organizational sustainability, and equity-driven practices. I have extensive experience implementing systems that support data-informed decision-making—an essential component of ACAPT’s most recent strategic plan. For instance, within the DPT program at Western Michigan University, I led efforts to strengthen program assessment structures, streamline curriculum evaluation, and use longitudinal outcomes data to enhance student success and accreditation readiness. These experiences directly support strategic priorities related to quality improvement, evidence-based teaching, and accountability.

Additionally, I actively contribute to initiatives that advance leadership development, operational efficiency, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. My work with ACAPT positions me to contribute meaningfully to strategic goals at the national level. I have a proven ability to implement cross-institutional collaborations, facilitate stakeholder engagement, and align resource allocation with organizational priorities—all critical to advancing strategic plan initiatives in a purposeful and sustainable way.

Technical Skills: Advanced; My technical experience is rooted in data-driven program assessment, educational analytics, and the use of technology to support academic operations. I routinely work with complex student performance databases, curriculum level assessment systems, and institutional reporting platforms to identify trends, monitor outcomes, and guide decision making. I have led projects using benchmarking tools, survey platforms, and data visualization dashboards to support program quality and accreditation readiness. Additionally, I have extensive experience integrating learning management systems, digital evaluation tools, and software used in physical therapy education to ensure that faculty and students have the resources needed for efficient and effective teaching and learning.

Beyond academic analytics, I also use technical expertise to support research activities—including systematic reviews, mixed methods data analysis, and the management of multi site datasets. My responsibilities often include synthesizing large volumes of data, translating findings into actionable recommendations, and presenting technical information in accessible formats for faculty, administrators, and national audiences.

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 4	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING 4	INFLUENCING 4	EXECUTING 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Systems-thinking- Data-informed- Able to prioritize	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Networking- Trustworthy- Empathetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Data-informed- Listening to understand- Coalition-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Accountable- Rigor- Clearly define objectives