

American Council of Academic Physical Therapy National Consortium of Clinical Educators

March 17, 2020

Report to ACAPT Board

RE: COVID-19 Survey results

ACAPT Board Members:

The NCCE has completed data collection following our quick outreach to NCCE Academic Members initiated on Sunday March 15th and following the CAPTE initial response dated March 13th. This report shares the information and potential actionable items. The survey questions can be viewed at the end of this document for ease of reference.

RESPONSE RATE

Response rate:

- 81%
- 129 programs of the 160 member institutions responding
- Program respondents across the nation
- *Data reported reflected of responses up to 3/16/2020 at 11:59 pm*

UPCOMING GRADUATES

Total number of students in current graduating class of 2020:

- n = 6218

Programmatic Graduation Dates (n = 129 responding programs):

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| ○ April: n = 8 | ○ October: n = 1 |
| ○ May: n = 90 | ○ November: n = 0 |
| ○ June: n = 3 | ○ December: n = 12 |
| ○ July: n = 2 | ○ January: n = 2 |
| ○ August: n = 6 | ○ February: n = 0 |
| ○ September: n = 3 | ○ March: n = 2 |

REMOVAL/CANCELLATION OF STUDENTS IN CLINICAL ENVIRONMENTS

Number of programs and who have had students removed from or not able to begin a current CE experience:

- 91% (n = 118) of responding programs

Number of students who have been removed from or not able to begin a current CE experience:

- 21% (n = 1304) of total number of students in upcoming graduating cohort

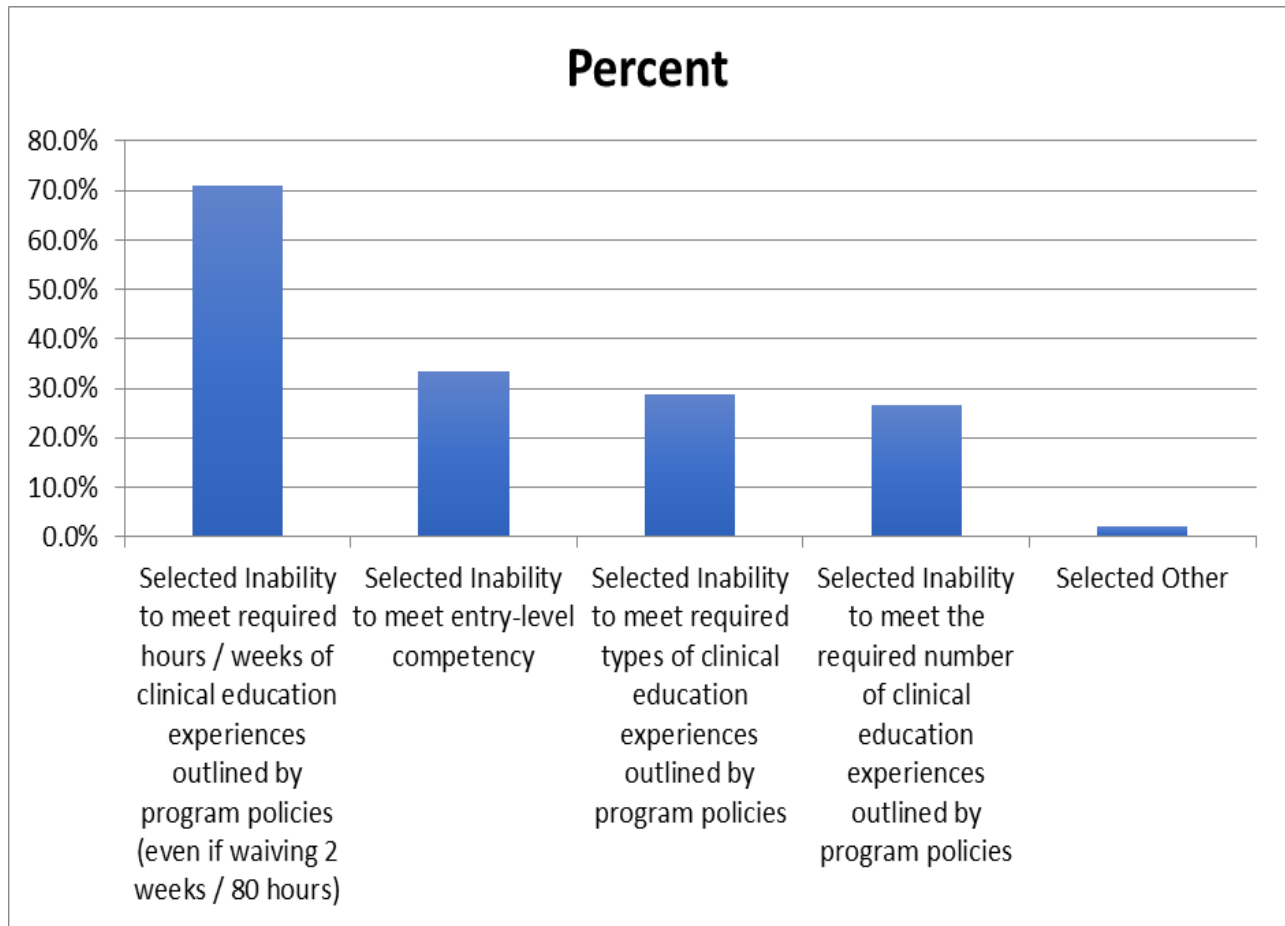
Total number of programs reporting they have students whose graduation **WILL BE** delayed based on the known information at this time (CAPTE’s original guidelines dated 3/13/2020):

- 44% (n = 56) of responding programs
- Total number of students delayed: 11% (n=656) of upcoming graduates

Total number of programs reporting they have students whose graduation **WILL POTENTIALLY** be delayed based on the know information at this time (CAPTE’s original guidelines) = 110 (86%)

- 86% (n = 110) of responding programs
- Total number of students who will POTENTIALLY be delayed = 38% (n=2359) of upcoming graduates

Reason for delay/potential delay of graduation:



Open ended responses under “other” highlighted a trickle-down effect and concerns about national shortages as well as concerns about completing didactic curriculum in preparation for clinical education experiences:

- “DPT3 class of 2020 will be okay for graduation; DPT2 class of 2021 may not be able to start terminal clinicals on time due to sites and due to completing prerequisite coursework including ICE and labs and cumulative practical exams”
- “The next TCEE (class 2021) starts in June which could be affected.”
- “Inability to start clinical education experience on time due to inability to have on-campus labs during didactic semester”
- “With the number of spots being canceled regionally, the makeup time for ALL students impacted are likely to significantly impact clinical placements over the next year”
- “There is going to be a national shortage of availability for CEEs. There needs to be greater flexibility”

For those programs who graduate more than one cohort in 2020, 13 of the 14 programs (93%) reported concerns about meeting clinical education requirements in their subsequent cohort. This supports concerns noted in the previous question regarding the “trickle-down effect”.

Considering CAPTEs criteria (1C4) of meeting entry-level prior to graduation, the survey asked respondents to provide the number of upcoming graduates who have demonstrated entry-level performance and would meet this criteria.

- 42% (n = 2525) of the upcoming graduates
 - 5 programs did not respond (totaling 219 upcoming graduates) so total number of graduates for this item was decreased by 219 (from 6218 to 5999 total)

NCCCE academic members were also asked that if the program only had to meet the CAPTE minimum of 30 weeks of full-time clinical education experiences, how many of the upcoming graduates would be delayed or potentially delayed in graduating:

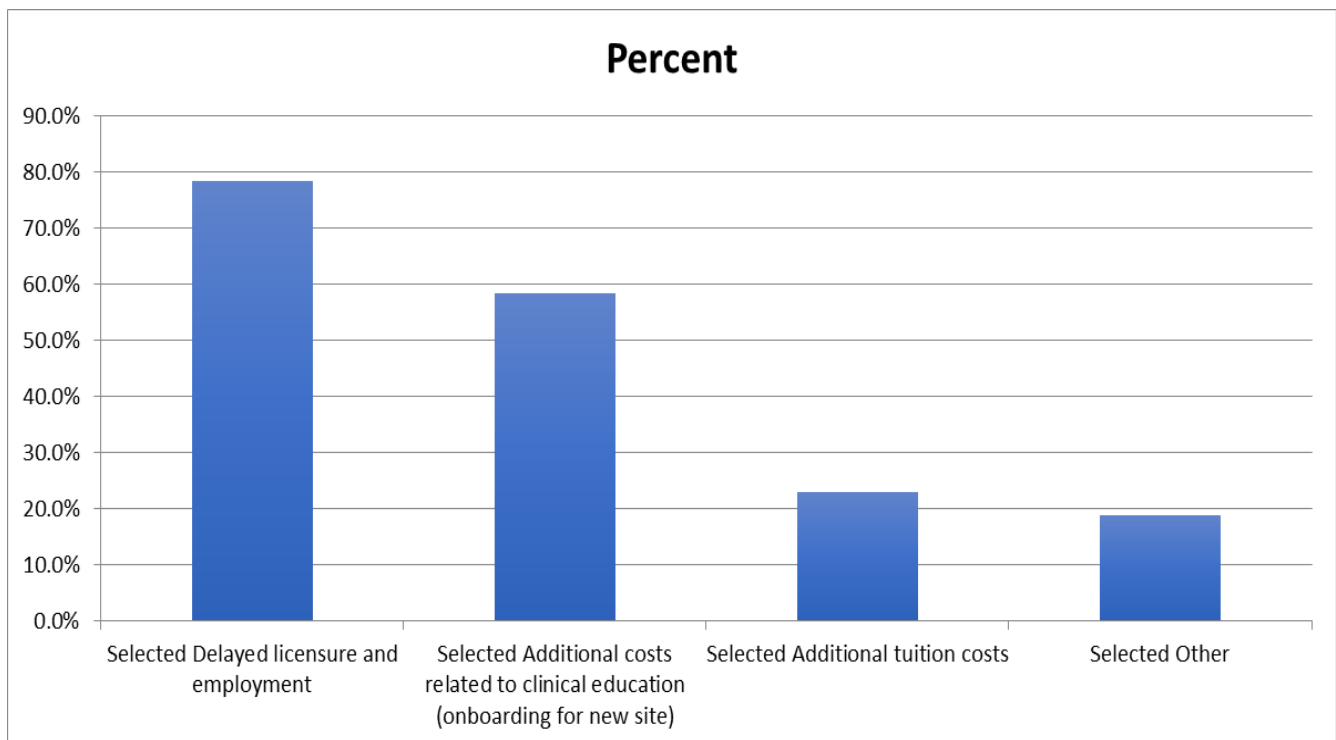
- 26% (n = 1601) of upcoming graduates

Due to already-present student debt issues, survey questions also inquired about financial impact on students:

If a student's graduation is delayed, will there be financial impact on the student?

- **YES:** 92% (n = 117) of responding programs

Reason for financial impact:



Open-ended responses related to “other” most often included concerns for **additional living expenses** (housing, travel, etc.)

CLINICAL EDUCATION CAPACITY AND SETTINGS

While a full qualitative analysis was not completed, many comments reflected concern about capacity for clinical placements for future clinical experiences as well as the depth and breadth of clinical settings. Given the interdependent relationship with the didactic curriculum, delays in delivery of academic content will alter clinical education schedules, thus stacking delayed clinical experiences on top of already planned clinical education experiences. This will inevitably increase the burden on the clinical sites.

Capacity:

- “My concern right now is not on our graduating class... Because our classes run as a cohort, these students times in CE will be pushed back-which may cause a backlog on availability to sites, because almost every program nationally is having the same issue.”
- “The burden on our clinical partners is going to be tremendous.”
- “...to find make up sites will be incredibly difficult, since all facilities are experiencing the same issues...”

Settings:

- “CAPTE needs to consider flexibility in setting "types" to allow programs to meet weeks needed and allow supplemental ways for setting which student is being canceled; especially for those students who have had an exposure to setting in an ICE experience.”
- “If CAPTE could relax the requirement of having to meet the program's goals for TYPES of clinical experiences, I would not have any students at risk for not graduating on time.”
- “Breadth, however, is likely to be affected.”

SUMMARY

We thank CAPTE for revisiting the original Physical Therapy Education and COVID-19 guidelines. The revised guidelines dated on March 16, 2020 addressed many (but not all) of the concerns reported by many of the survey respondents. A number of respondents indicated a delay in graduation due to the inability to meet the types of clinical settings outlined in their program requirements; therefore, we urge CAPTE to consider being flexible with programmatic setting requirements while not jeopardizing breadth and depth standards.

As a clinical education community, we must consider the long-term challenges that the current situation will pose, especially with the number of PT and PTA programs using shared resources. Many anecdotal conversations and open survey responses voice concerns about future cohorts of students being negatively impacted and our clinical education community (instructors and sites) being overwhelmed while already functioning in a capacity-limited clinical education environment.

As leaders in physical therapist education, it is essential that we (CAPTE, ACAPT, APTE, NCCE, CESIG, PTASIG) work together to ensure that individual program needs are met, while also collaborating for the best interest of the profession. We recommend finding mechanisms to include all stakeholders, streamline communication, plan intentionally, reduce redundancy, and share resources in order to ensure cohesiveness of the clinical education community.