

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE

ACAPT Candidate Bio and Statement – 2022

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: Amber Fitzsimmons, PT MS, DPTSc

Position Board of Directors

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Amber Fitzsimmons, PT, MS, DPTSc is an associate professor, program director, and Chair of the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science, at the University of California, San Francisco. She practiced for a decade in acute care, acute rehabilitation, outpatient neurology, and skilled nursing settings. Subsequently, she served as a consultant for automotive companies such as Toyota and BraunAbility, both leaders in their commitment to change lives for people with physical disabilities through innovative automotive mobility solutions that provide independence and ease-of-use. Combining clinical expertise with business development skills, she returned to academia to pursue research in interprofessional collaboration in the workplace. She joined the UCSF faculty in 2013. Her research agenda focuses on belonging in health professions education. She is a member of the UCSF Academy of Medical Educator, and is a course developer for numerous faculty development sessions across UCSF as part of the Center for Faculty Educators. She has served ACAPT as a founding board and nominating committee member for National Interprofessional Education Committee and a founding board member for the Consortia for Humanities, Ethics, and Professionalism. Currently, she serves as the ACAPT representative on the IPEC core competencies revision working group.</p>	<p>The UCSF Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science includes three robust faculty practices (50K patient visits/year), 10 interprofessional clinical sites, a DPT and PhD program, three residencies, and a robust research community. Using a relationship centered, collaborative leadership style, I enjoy solving complex problems, negotiating strategic priorities across academic and healthcare environments, managing budgets, and developing innovative academic and DEI programming departmentally and across our institution. This experience combined with my passion for DEI initiatives, align with ACAPT's strategic priorities: Academic excellence, DEI, and Influence. These priorities are the basis for advancing health equity and dismantling racism and oppressive academic and healthcare systems and policies. Therefore, I believe ACAPT's commitment to collecting and using data is necessary for data-informed decisions that drive our work to meet these societal needs. As an inclusive organization, we must commit to equitable and transparent practices in data collection, analysis, and interpretation so that academic excellence, DEI, and influence are supported through the full inclusion and understanding of the needs of our entire physical therapy community (patients, communities, learners, clinical partners, etc.). It would be my pleasure to serve ACAPT and to foster a diverse and inclusive mission driven organization.</p>

Name: Alvaro Gurovich, PT, PhD, FACSM

Position: Board of Directors

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Alvaro “Al” Gurovich, P.T., Ph.D., FACSM is the DPT Program Director at The University of Texas at El Paso. Al received his Physical Therapy degree from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in 1990 and worked as a clinician for more than 15 years. Even though he was tenured and the Academic Director of a PT school in Chile, he moved to University of Florida where he received his doctoral degree in 2010. Once graduated, he moved to a post-doctoral position at UF College of Medicine for one and a half years. Al is an active member of the APTA’s Academy of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Physical Therapy serving as CSM abstract reviewers, Chair of the Research Grant Review Committee, and Editor in Chief of the Cardiopulmonary PT Journal. In addition, Al has served in CAPTE’s DEI committee reviewing CAPTE’s standards to increase professional diversity and, as a DPT program director, he has been involved with ACAPT in the past 5 years primarily through the RIPPT consortium. In 2021, Al was invited to participate in ACAPT’s strategic planning retreat, where his contributions were well received by the ACAPT Board of Directors.</p>	<p>I strongly believe that our PT profession is built on 3 main pillars: Applied Anatomy, Applied Neurosciences, and Applied Physiology. In addition, and as it is normally expressed to our students, ‘Half of what we know today will be proven to be incorrect in the next ten years. Unfortunately, we don’t know which half that is going to be’. And this is especially true nowadays with new genomics discoveries. We need to educate (not train) our future colleagues how to think critically as patients are unique and do not follow stereotypes. As program director, I encourage the use of a scientific approach to problem solving to improve critical/clinical thinking. We need to be excellent, rigorous, and innovative educators to enhance the human experience. Excellence, creativity, rigor, and critical thinking are all common characteristics of research and the ACAPT strategic plan addresses all these characteristics within 3 areas: Innovation (creativity), knowledge (rigor), and leadership (excellence). If elected as an ACAPT director, I will work to enhance our professional pillars in PT education and to build bridges with CAPTE to enhance excellence. Finally, as foreign-trained PT and program director of the most diverse DPT program, I look forward to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the PT profession.</p>

Name: Beth Moody Jones, PT, EdD, MS, OCS

Position: Board of Directors

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>I have been a PT for almost 40 years and a member of the APTA since I was a student at University of Vermont. I am currently the Division Chief and Professor at University of New Mexico, a small diverse program with about 15 faculty and approximately 90 students in our three-year program. My research during my recent acquisition of my EdD (leadership) was a case study looking at qualitative and quantitative data for student success in our highly diverse student body. As the flagship university, we reflect the diversity of our state with close to 50% URM and representation from most of our rural underserved communities. Our inclusivity and holistic approach to our curriculum, with multiple points of support, positively serves the people of New Mexico through our students’ successful graduation and passing of the NPTE. In addition to directing the program, I also teach gross anatomy and practice once a week in a local outpatient clinic. I have 25 years’ experience as an academician, DCE and faculty member, at three Universities. As a specialist in the treatment of the spine, I have recently sent in my portfolio for my second recertification of my orthopaedic specialization.</p>	<p>It is with humility that I ask for your support to serve as a member of the board of directors of ACAPT. I am an active volunteer with APTA, having served in multiple roles in my 40 years of APTA membership. I was “that” student that created and started the Student APTA club, creating the first board liaison position in Vermont. Currently I serve on the CSM steering Committee and will finish my association with the PTCAS workgroup this coming year. Notably, I served on the Academy of Orthopaedics Board of Directors for 6 years as the Education Chair with a previous 3 years as the Vice Chair. During my tenure, I helped oversee the substantial growth of CSM from 2004-2013. At University of New Mexico, I was the Education Program Director from 2014 – 2018, in charge of curriculum administration and testing prior to my current Division Chief position (2018-present). I am organized and tend to see the big picture of things. I am a champion of strategic vision, results-focus and a problem solver. I tend to be future oriented, connecting vision with story, aligning people and resources. I would be honored to serve the profession through this ACAPT position.</p>

Name: Patrick Pabian, PT, DPT, PhD

Position: Board of Directors

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Patrick Pabian is the Chair of the Division of Physical Therapy and Associate Director of the School of Kinesiology and Physical Therapy at the University of Central Florida. He has been the director of the DPT program at UCF for over 10 years where his leadership has contributed to the development of an Academic Health Science Center, college-wide academic reorganization, development of a multi-site faculty practice, and initiation of a residency program. He is a graduate of the APTA Fellowship in Education Leadership in 2014 and is board-certified as both a sports and orthopedic clinical specialist. He is the current chair of the Florida Board of Physical Therapy, which he has served on since 2015. He is a member of the Editorial Board for JOPTE and has also contributed to various task forces that have resulted in professional resources which include student debt (ACAPT/ELP) as well as educational research funding (APTE). In 2022 he is being recognized as fellow of the National Academies of Practice. He possesses an entry-level degree in physical therapy from Bradley University, and a PhD in higher education from the University of Central Florida, with an added focus on advanced methodology in educational and human sciences.</p>	<p>I have unique qualifications for a position on the ACAPT Board due to my substantive and diverse involvement in professional activities as well as my career path to an education leadership position. My early career experience as a clinical educator and then DCE has assisted in appreciating the level of support and guidance needed for both academic and clinical education successes. Further, I feel that my hybrid background and training as a clinical specialist physical therapist with robust higher education and leadership training provides me with a strong understanding of physical therapy education. As a current academic administrator, I fully support the development of ACAPT's initiatives to harvest and utilize data to guide our decision-making as an academy in order to cultivate excellence in physical therapy education. As a current member of the ACAPT Education Committee, I also feel that cultivation of educational research should be further emphasized and enhanced, especially as ACAPT develops stronger understanding of our institutional profiles. These products should inform us as professional educators and guide us as a professional organization. If ACAPT wishes to meet its goals, then a robust understanding of institutional data and sound educational research must be the foundation of our holdings.</p>

Name: Kirk Peck, PT, PhD

Position: Board of Directors

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Dr. Peck holds a degree in Exercise Science, a Master's in Physical Therapy, and a PhD in Higher Education and Administration. He is current Chair of the Department of Physical therapy at Creighton University, Omaha, NE with a teaching focus in exercise physiology and wellness, therapeutic interventions, and political advocacy. Dr. Peck provides clinical services to Native American tribal members through the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska and is also licensed to practice canine and equine physical therapy.</p> <p>Dr. Peck served two-terms as President of the Nebraska Physical Therapy Association, including 20-years as Chair of the state legislative committee. In addition, he served two-terms as President of the Animal Physical Therapy Special Interest Group (APTSIG) of the Academy of Orthopedic Physical Therapy, APTA, and past Chair of the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy Ethics and Legislation Committee. In 2016 Dr. Peck led an ACAPT sponsored Task Force to inaugurate the first National Student Honors Society recognized by the profession. He currently serves as Vice Chair on the Nebraska Licensure Board of Physical Therapy, and also conducts PT education site-visits for the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE).</p>	<p>Board leadership positions in any organization require a collective effort of individual talent, personal passion, and diverse expertise. Candidates elected to positions that require decision making for a greater cause therefore need to accept the responsibility with genuine dedication and humility. Excellent attributes that if appropriately executed will most certainly increase the odds of achieving organizational strategic goals.</p> <p>For over 30-years I have served in a variety of leadership roles at both regional and national levels, including positions with the Federation of State Boards of PT, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, the Nebraska State Chapter, and six-years as President of a Special Interest Group within an APTA Academy. The diversity of leadership has afforded me the opportunity to engage in many collegial activities that have enhanced the PT profession. The primary vision I see for ACAPT over the next several years is to work with others to successfully implement the goals and objectives outlined in the most recently adopted strategic plan. I would be honored to serve as an elected board member to collaborate with all members of ACAPT as the organization continues to promote its national recognition as a leader creating leaders within the profession.</p>

Name: Donna Applebaum, PT, DPT, MS

Position: Secretary

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Donna Applebaum, PT, DPT, MS is Director of Clinical Education at the MGH Institute of Health Professions in Boston, MA. She has been an educator and administrator in the academic and clinical setting for over 30 years. Dr. Applebaum held previous positions as Rehabilitation Manager and Site Coordinator of Clinical Education in 2 clinical organizations. Dr. Applebaum has served in both elected and appointed roles in ACAPT and the APTA Education Leadership Partnership (ELP). She was the founding Chair of the ACAPT National Consortium of Clinical Educators (NCCE) and completed 2 terms (2015-2019). As NCCE Chair she supported equal member representation of academic and clinical educators and initiated task forces to study payment for clinical education, the clinical education placement process, and use of observation hours in academic admissions. She has been intimately involved in all phases of the ELP development of a vision for PT education (2017-2021), including serving as co-lead for the Clinical Education and the Academic-Clinical Partnerships Strategy Groups. She is currently serving as Chair of the ACAPT Membership Review Task Force. Dr. Applebaum's scholarship and service have been dedicated to development of mutually-beneficial academic-clinical partnerships and effective systems for communication across education stakeholders.</p>	<p>The pursuit of academic excellence is reliant on ACAPT's ability to create innovative and sustainable models of education by connecting and collaborating with all stakeholders in education. A priority is to create academic and clinical partnerships to provide education. I have spent my entire career at the intersection of education and practice as both educator and administrator and appreciate the critical roles each member of the academy and practice community plays in the development of our future clinicians, educators and scholars. I have been continuously engaged with ACAPT and the Education Leadership Partnership over the last several years and have acquired an understanding of the breadth of issues facing PT education. Through my various leadership and professional service roles I have a working knowledge of the network across the profession at the regional and national level related to the continuum of education and have developed many personal relationships that will assist in carrying out the responsibilities of the Secretary. I am detail-oriented and value timely, accurate, transparent communication. My humility drives me to ask questions. I believe I will bring value to support ACAPT's growth through the combination of my professional roles and experiences and strength in communication.</p>

Name: Myles Quiben, PT, PhD, DPT, MS

Position: Secretary

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Myles Quiben, PT, PhD, DPT, MS is the Associate Dean and Chair of the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of North Texas Health Science Center, teaching clinical medicine, cardiopulmonary, geriatric, and neurologic physical therapy. She is a dual certified clinical specialist in Neurologic and Geriatric Physical Therapy through the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties.</p> <p>She obtained her DPT and PhD in Physical Therapy from the University of Central Arkansas and a Fellowship in Geriatric Research at UT Health, with an MS in Clinical Investigation. She is trained in project management, Lean Sigma Six, and is an advanced simulation instructor.</p> <p>Myles serves as ACAPT NIPEC Chair and in the Strategic Initiative Panel on Simulation in Physical Therapy Education. Nationally, she serves in the APTA Geriatrics Board of Directors, as a Texas Physical Therapy Association delegate, and as an APTA Clinical Instructor Trainer; with past service in FSBPT and ABPTS. She is a Fellow of the Education Leadership Institute, the National Academies of Practice, and the Texas Physical Therapy Association. She received the APTA Baethke-Carlin Award for Excellence in Academic Teaching, APTA Lucy Blair Award, and the APTA Geriatrics Distinguished Educator Award and President's Award.</p>	<p>I have been involved in physical therapist education for 20 years, starting as an instructor, serving as a department chair, and now as the associate dean of academic affairs. Throughout this time, I have been involved in all aspects of teaching, scholarship, service, and clinical practice. These have given me distinct insights as an educator, administrator, clinician, and scholar. I am committed to excellence in entry-level and post-professional education, faculty development, entrepreneurship in physical therapy, and innovative educational initiatives such as robust development of simulation, interprofessional education training, and new models of clinical education. I bring collaborative work experiences serving in professional boards, including strategic planning and execution, and project management. The shortage of post professionally prepared faculty and unstructured faculty development, the lack of diversity in the academic physical therapy workforce, and a need for a sustainable clinical education framework are some of the pressing issues ACAPT should explicitly address. The ACAPT strategic plan goals for academic innovation and diversity, equity, and inclusion, are consistent with these issues and with the overarching goal of facilitating excellence in education. I look forward to contributing to the dialogue and actions towards excellence in physical therapist education. I am honored to serve.</p>

Name: Kim Varnado, PT, DPT, DHSc

Position: Secretary

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Kimberly Varnado, PT, DPT, DHSc, is the founding Program Director and Associate Professor of the College of Saint Mary (Blended Learning) Doctor of Physical Therapy Program in Omaha, Nebraska. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from Tennessee State University, Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis, Indiana, and Doctor of Health Science degree with education concentration from A.T. Still University in Mesa, Arizona. Dr. Varnado completed orthopedic residency and manual orthopedic physical therapy fellowship training at Kaiser Permanente in West Los Angeles, California. She is a board-certified orthopedic clinical specialist (emeritus) and a fellow of the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists. In 2018, Dr. Varnado graduated from the APTA Fellowship in Education Leadership Program. Dr. Varnado's research interests include investigating blended learning models, DEI initiatives, and faculty mentorship in physical therapy education programs. Her service to the profession includes serving on the Board of Directors for ACAPT, Candidacy Review Council for the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education (ABPTRFE), the APTA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, and she is completing her third term as a delegate for the Arizona Physical Therapy Association.</p>	<p>I build inclusive communities and empower groups and individuals to use their strengths, knowledge, networks, and resources to advocate for health and education equity for all. I have experience working with organizations to improve access to physical therapy services and education. To empower others, I use skills acquired through self-study and formal education to mentor, coach, and consult with university administrators, program directors, faculty, private practice owners, students, clinicians, and community partners around the country. I spend considerable time reading, researching, studying, listening, and anticipating society's changing needs. I have extensive experience in distance learning as an educator and student. I use culturally responsive pedagogy to assist faculty and students in building robust and trusting learning partnerships to improve outcomes (academic and patient care). I consult with established and developing physical therapist education programs seeking CAPTE accreditation. My training and experiences have prepared me to serve as the Board of Directors Secretary to address sections of the strategic plans outlined by ACAPT, including academic innovation and excellence, academic leadership and advocacy, commitment to DEI initiatives, and knowledge to elevate health care. I am a problem solver who enjoys envisioning creative ways to support people and communities.</p>

Name: Jennifer Braswell Christy, PT, PhD

Position: Nominating Committee

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Jennifer Braswell Christy, PT, PhD is Associate Professor and DPT Program Director at The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). Dr. Christy has been a faculty member at UAB since 2004 and teaches Neuroscience, Scientific Inquiry, Pediatrics and Vestibular Rehabilitation in the DPT program. She served as the chair of the DPT Program Admissions Committee from 2007-2018 and became the DPT Program Director in May, 2018. Dr. Christy is the current Director of Research for the Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy, and a graduate of the APTA Fellowship of Education Leadership. Her primary area of research is in the development of innovative intervention methods to improve gaze stability and balance in children with vestibular-related impairments. Related to this area of research, Dr. Christy teaches numerous continuing education courses in the U.S. and abroad. Dr. Christy received the UAB School of Health Professions Service Award in 2012, and the APTA Lucy Blair Service Award in 2017. Dr. Christy and her UAB team promote excellence in physical therapy education by focusing on their vision to create and translate knowledge that will enhance movement, health, wellness, and quality of life of individuals in a diverse society.</p>	<p>I would be honored to serve on the Nominating Committee for ACAPT. My leadership roles at UAB and in the APTA Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy, and participation in the APTA Fellowship of Education Leadership have enabled me to meet and develop relationships with many strong leaders in physical therapy. Within all of my leadership positions, I thoroughly enjoy helping others to build strong academic careers. As a transformative leader, my goal within all of my current leadership positions and roles is to build strong positive relationships with members of my team. An important issue facing PT education is the need for educational research. ACAPT's strategic plan addresses this important issue through "knowledge to elevate health care" and "creation of an institute of scholarship of teaching and learning." ACAPT is the perfect pipeline for educational researchers to study innovations in PT education and develop the next generation of PT educators. The Education Research Network Mentorship Program is an example of how this pipeline can make a positive impact in PT education. This effort, combined with the Grantsmanship and Mentorship in Educational Research (GAMER) workshop and the resources earmarked for PT Education from the Foundation for Physical Therapy Research beautifully demonstrate how the APTA, Foundation and ACAPT work as a team to promote excellence in academic physical therapy.</p>

Name: Amy Gross McMillan, PT, PhD

Position: Nominating Committee

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Amy Gross McMillan, PT, PhD is Chair of the Department of Physical Therapy and DPT Program Director at East Carolina University. Dr. Gross McMillan has been the program representative to ACAPT since assuming the Chair and Program Director positions in 2016. She currently serves on the ACAPT Leadership Academy Student Leadership Development Subcommittee and is a member of the Clinical Reasoning Curricula and Assessment, Education and Pedagogy, and Research-Intensive Programs in Physical Therapy consortia. Dr. Gross McMillan has served on the Research Committee of the APTA Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy and on the Nominating Committee of the APTA Academy of Research. She has held faculty positions in physical therapy at University of Central Arkansas (1997-2004) and East Carolina University (2004-present), and completed leadership development programs at East Carolina University (Chancellor's Leadership Academy, 2014) and through the UNC system (Bridges Academic Leadership for Women, 2012). Dr. Gross McMillan received her BS in PT from University of Delaware (1984), MS in Neuromuscular Sciences/Infant Studies from University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill (1988), and PhD in Neuroscience from University of Delaware (1998).</p>	<p>I am honored to be considered for the ACAPT Nominating Committee. ACAPT has been an essential part of my development as a department chair and program director, and I am now able to contribute to the continuing pursuit of excellence in physical therapy education and educational research. My previous experience as a nominating committee member and my network of PTs and PT educators across the United States will enable me to recruit excellent candidates for future elections. ACAPT must continue to establish guidelines for excellence in PT education by considering proven methods and innovative ideas supported by solid PT education research. We must recruit and develop diverse students who can advocate for themselves and for our profession, and who will educate future PTs. We must find solutions to the current imbalance between costs of PT education and the value of PT services. To ensure excellence in our professional workforce, we must ensure excellence in PT education, by carefully considering the need for growth of existing programs and development of new programs. As a nominating committee member, I will seek individuals for ACAPT leadership positions who are committed to innovation, inclusion and inquiry in academic physical therapy.</p>

Name: Jamie Dehan, PT, PhD

Position: Nominating Committee

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Dr. Jamie Dehan has worked with the Stefani Doctor of Physical Therapy program since 2010, currently serving in the role of program director. She began her academic career at Rockhurst University earning her B.S. in Chemistry and Master of Physical Therapy degrees. She continued her commitment to lifelong learning by completing her transitional DPT from the University of Kansas and her Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration through Saint Louis University. Most recently, Dr. Dehan is a 2021 graduate of the APTA Fellowship in Higher Education. She stays current in clinical practice with experience in a variety of settings throughout her career, most recently working in the home health setting. Dr. Dehan enjoys helping the next generation of our profession develop their God-given talents and follow their true calling in becoming a physical therapist.</p>	<p>Working in higher education the past 12 years has offered multiple opportunities to observe and participate in the strengths and challenges in PT education. I share the vision of ACAPT “to create a shared culture of excellence in education, scholarship, and service to improve societal health” and want to do my part to help champion this work. To continue towards our strategic goals for academic innovation and diversity, equity and inclusion, ACAPT needs to be comprised of visionary individuals with strong leadership skills who represent the diversity we promote. Starting my academic career as director of clinical education, I have a network of individuals dedicated to educating students using innovative educational models. Now serving as program director, and as a graduate of the APTA Fellowship in Higher Education, my network continues to grow offering access to more individuals dedicated to the pursuit of academic excellence in PT education. My service on the APTA Faculty SIG and NCCE Nominating Committees offer experience to this position and serving as Chair of the ACAPT Awards & Recognition Committee offers familiarity to working with the ACAPT board. I humbly request your vote for a position on the Nominating Committee.</p>