

Vice Chair: Institute for Community Engagement - Candidate Bio and Statements – 2025

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: Erin Wentzell PT, DPT, DrPH, Board Certified Specialist in Pediatric Physical Therapy

Title: Assistant Professor

Position: Institute - Vice Chair of Community Engagement

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Erin Wentzell, PT, DPT, DrPH, Board Certified in Pediatric Physical Therapy, earned her DPT (2006) from Oakland University and her DrPH in Health Behavior from the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health in 2023. She has been a pediatric physical therapist since 2007, earning her Specialist Certification in Pediatrics from the Board of Physical Therapy Specialists in 2012 and recertified in 2022. She practices in Washington DC in early intervention. Dr. Wentzell has been a core faculty member in the GW Physical Therapy Program (GWPT) since 2012. She teaches courses related to pediatric physical therapy practice, health equity, behavior change and teaching practices, professional formation, and clinical reasoning. In addition, Dr. Wentzell teaches a community-based service-learning course at GWPT and is one of the founding members of the Engaged Department initiative, which aims to incorporate community-engaged scholarship throughout the GWPT curriculum. Through numerous partnerships, Dr. Wentzell has engaged in community-based participatory research, critical service learning, and community engagement. She is a Nashman Affiliate Faculty through the Honey W. Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service and an active member in multiple APTA academies (Education, Pediatrics, and ALI).</p>	<p>The Institute for Community Engagement promotes, supports, and cultivates partnerships to create health and engage across disciplines. I am well suited to serve as the Institute Vice Chair because of my experience developing and maintaining partnerships over the past decade through my community-engaged service-learning work. Through my work with my university’s Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service, I have gained skills in building equitable and sustainable connections. I have held leadership and advocacy positions within the state and APTA levels as a Federal Affairs Liaison and currently represent the APTA on the Board of Directors of the Physical Activity Alliance. My clinical background in early intervention and my doctorate in public health prepare me for holistically supporting health. My training in public health provides me with a unique perspective that would serve the Institute well. As the Vice Chair of the Institute for Community Engagement, I would work to lead this new and growing group toward achieving ACAPT’s vision of excellence to improve societal health.</p>

Name: Michael S Simpson PT, DPT, Board Certified Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Clinical Specialist

Title: Associate Professor of Clinical Physical Therapy

Position: Institute - Vice Chair of Community Engagement

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Michael S. Simpson, PT, DPT, is an Associate Professor of Clinical Physical Therapy and served as the Director of Clinical Education from 2008 - 2022 at the University of Southern California Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy. Dr. Simpson is a Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Physical Therapy (CCS) and an APTA Level 1 Credential Clinical Trainer since 2013. His teaching responsibilities at USC include clinical management of the patient with cardiovascular, pulmonary, general medical conditions and principles of disease. He is also responsible for threading acute care throughout the curriculum and serves as a faculty facilitator for Interprofessional Education and Collaboration for Geriatrics (IECG). A practicing clinician for over 30 years, his clinical experiences include positions as a staff & senior physical therapist, clinical instructor, site coordinator of clinical education, and director of physical therapy services. His clinical practice has focused on the management of the patient with complex medical sequela, primarily critically ill individuals with cardiovascular and pulmonary conditions. Dr. Simpson has been actively involved at the district, chapter, and national level of the APTA since 1995 and served as California Chapter Chief Delegate to the APTA House of Delegates for two terms 2019 - 2024.</p>	<p>Consistent with the goals of ACAPT I'd like to be involved in the development of processes or resources that will support and promote academic innovation. I have a long history with clinical education and understanding of the perspectives of both the clinical site and the academic institution. I would love to engage in discussion, strategic planning, and pursuits toward excellence in clinical education. I think we've talked for a long time about "is it broken", but I haven't seen much change and think there are untapped opportunities in the clinical partnerships that could be strengthened between the site and the academic institution. We have many more shared values and objectives than we realize at times to enhance healthcare and to promote the development of our new entry-level clinicians. As I have become more involved in interprofessional education I see so many opportunities that exist that could be realized to allow physical therapy to truly move toward excellence in primary care promoting health and wellness. I do believe my strong networking and relationship development skills will help to facilitate greater success in these partnerships.</p>

Name: Tonya Apke PT, DPT, NBC-HWC

Title: Associate Professor Clinical and Director of Clinical Education

Position: Institute - Vice Chair of Community Engagement

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Dr. Apke is an Associate Professor, Clinical and Director of Clinical Education in the Physical Therapy Division at The Ohio State University's School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. She is an emeritus board-certified Orthopedic Physical Therapist, a credentialed trainer for the APTA Clinical Instructor Credentialing Program and completed the certification from APTA's Academy of Leadership and Innovation LAMP program. Dr. Apke is also a nationally board-certified health and wellness coach.</p> <p>She served two terms as President of the Ohio Physical Therapy Association and has been involved in national leadership roles on the ACAPT Leadership Resource subcommittee, and two terms as Membership Secretary and the APTA Academy of Education, Clinical Education Special Interest Group. Dr. Apke is an active member of the Ohio-Kentucky Consortium of Physical Therapy Education and serves as a Wellness Innovator at Ohio State.</p> <p>Her research interests focus on clinical education, remediation, and student wellbeing. Dr. Apke teaches professional issues, clinical education, and healthcare policy, and has presented regionally, statewide, and nationally on topics related to clinical education and student wellbeing.</p>	<p>As a candidate for Vice Chair of the Institute for Community Engagement, I bring 26 years of academic experience, including serving as Director of Clinical Education at both a small private institution and a large academic medical center. As a DCE, I've led the development of innovative clinical education curricula, fostering strong clinical partnerships and ensuring high standards of student learning. Beyond academia, I have demonstrated leadership in the Ohio Physical Therapy Association (OPTA), where I served two terms as President and led the development of a leadership certificate program for members. I've also held national leadership roles within ACAPT and APTA, advocating for physical therapy professionals.</p> <p>In my role as Wellness Innovator, I lead quality improvement initiatives for faculty, staff, and students. I am committed to enhancing education, advocating for our profession, and promoting wellbeing at all levels. With my diverse background in clinical education, leadership, and wellness, I am prepared to contribute effectively to the Institute for Community Engagement. I humbly ask for your vote and thank you for your consideration.</p>