



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF  
ACADEMIC PHYSICAL THERAPY

*The following rules will be effective in the 2016-17 admission cycle. For questions, please contact [acapt@apta.org](mailto:acapt@apta.org) and your email will be forwarded to the appropriate individual(s) for response.*

**ADMISSIONS TRAFFIC RULES FOR PROGRAMS:**

*The Members of the American Council of Academic Physical Therapy adopted the following Admissions Traffic Rules for Physical Therapist Education Programs on October 2, 2015:*

- 1) Programs may begin extending offers of admission on applications deemed complete by the program at any time during the admissions cycle.
- 2) Programs cannot require a deposit prior to January 15 of the year of enrollment or January 15 of year prior to enrollment for January and February start programs.
- 3) Programs must indicate to applicants whether deposits are non-refundable, including those voluntarily paid before the deposit deadline.
- 4) The maximum, cumulative deposit amount an entry-level PT education program may require accepted applicants to pay as a commitment to enroll is \$1,500.
- 5) Programs should not knowingly accept or enroll applicants who have started classes at another program.



**THE RULES WERE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA:**

Admissions traffic rules would improve the efficiency of the admissions process for physical therapist education programs by reducing number of applicants who hold multiple acceptances, submit multiple deposits, or withdraw from one program after start of classes to attend another program;

Admissions traffic rules would be limited to entry-level, Doctor of Physical Therapy education programs in the United States;

The admissions traffic rules would exclude early assurance pathways, dual-degree programs, post-professional degree programs, and PTCAS early decision applicants;

The admissions traffic rules would apply to both PTCAS and non-PTCAS programs;

Physical therapist education programs must be individually and collectively accountable for complying with the rules, and hold applicants accountable, for the common good;

The proposed rules would be effective beginning in the 2016-2017 admissions cycle; and

Multiple health profession education associations have successfully adopted admissions traffic rules to protect member institutions and applicants.

**NEED FOR ADMISSIONS TRAFFIC RULES:**

A more unified admissions and enrollment process should benefit programs and applicants. Forty-nine percent of all programs that responded to the Admissions Task Force survey in May 2014 were supportive of the idea of establishing admissions traffic rules, and an additional 37% were undecided. The majority of programs that responded to the survey identified the following issues as concerns in the current admissions process:

- Applicants holding onto multiple acceptances.
- Applicants forfeiting deposits late in the admissions cycle.
- Applicants not notifying programs that they do not intend to matriculate.

Programs currently compensate for these issues by establishing longer wait or alternate lists and by communicating more frequently with accepted applicants to confirm their intent to enroll.

Seventy-six percent of applicants who responded to the PTCAS applicant survey in May 2014 indicated they would prefer “more consistency in the timing of admissions decisions across programs.” Applicants commented that admissions decision timelines and deposit deadlines were currently staggered in such a way that deposits for some programs were due before other programs had started interviewing, resulting in unnecessary deposits for "safety" purposes.



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## **FEEDBACK FROM PT ADMISSIONS COMMUNITY**

A previous version of the admissions traffic rules were presented to the ACAPT membership in fall 2014. The motion was defeated. In response to member feedback, the ACAPT board reconvened the task force and charged it with revising the rules incorporating member feedback with the goal of introducing the revised motion at the ACAPT annual business meeting in October 2015. Matthew Nuciforo, chair, presented a revised set of proposed admissions traffic rules during the ACAPT Open Forum at the 2015 APTA NEXT Conference in National Harbor, Maryland on Friday, June 5, 2015. Faculty and staff who were unable to attend the open forum at NEXT were invited via the ACAPT blast-of-the-week and PTCAS to review the rules and provide feedback on the Task Force online discussion forum through July 2015. Feedback from attendees at the 2014 ACAPT annual business meeting and the open forum at 2015 NEXT, and member feedback on the Task Force Discussion Board were considered in the development of the revised set of rules.