



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC PHYSICAL THERAPY

MOTIONS TEMPLATE

Motion Maker Name: James Gordon, University of Southern California
Motion Maker Phone: 626-665-6130
Motion Maker E-mail: jamesgor@usc.edu

Reference Committee Liaison Name: Heather Ross
Reference Committee Liaison Phone: 352-275-1133
Reference Committee Liaison Email: hross@brenau.edu

PROPOSED BY: James Gordon and Didi Matthews, University of Southern California

TITLE: National Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council for Academic Physical Therapy

That the American Council of Academic Physical Therapy (ACAPT) commit to the establishment of a National Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council for Academic Physical Therapy (NEDIC) in order to increase enrollment, retention and graduation of racial/ethnic minority students (Black, Indigenous, Latinx) in physical therapy professional education programs and increase the number of racial/ethnic minorities among faculty and leadership in professional education. The purpose of the proposed Council shall be to lead ACAPT in (1) developing effective programs to increase the representation of racial/ethnic minority students and faculty in physical therapist education programs and (2) creating new anti-racist policies and programming that will stimulate academic programs to strive for equity, diversity, and inclusion and support them in that effort.

The proposed Council shall be made up of five faculty members from ACAPT member programs who will be elected by the ACAPT member institutions. Two of the proposed Council's members shall be selected by the Council to serve as voting members of the ACAPT Board of Directors. The proposed council shall have dedicated funding which will be equivalent to 20% of the annual dues revenue. This funding shall be raised by adding a 20% diversity supplement to annual dues for ACAPT member programs.

In furtherance of this motion, the ACAPT Board of Directors shall, in partnership with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Consortium, develop a plan for implementation, with a progress report to the membership by March 15, 2021. The implementation plan shall lead to presentation of appropriate by-law amendments to the membership for a vote at the next ACAPT annual meeting. These by-law amendments should include, but not necessarily be limited to, adding a new amendment to Article V (Board of Directors) increasing membership to eleven, an amendment to Article VIII (Dues), a new Article X (Councils) which will allow for the creation of a Council, and also an amendment to Article II (Purpose) to include promotion of equity, diversity, and inclusion in academic physical therapy.

SUPPORT STATEMENT:

Black Lives Matter! The murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police along with the disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on Black people has forced our country to recognize not just the truth of this statement, but the urgency of demanding societal change to save Black lives. As the leaders of programs who educate future health professionals charged with providing health care to all individuals within our society, we are challenged to answer for the overwhelming lack of diversity in our profession, as well as the racist policies and ideologies inherent in the US health care system. Even *if* we are not to blame for these problems (with emphasis on *if*), we must do everything in our power to bring about change. APTA's vision statement, adopted in 2014, states that we will "transform society." And yet we have not even been able to transform ourselves. According to CAPTE data, in 2019 3.3% of graduates from physical



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC PHYSICAL THERAPY

49 therapist programs were African-American, 0.4% were American Indian, and 6.2% were Hispanic. These
50 percentages have barely changed over the last 10 years. As Greg Hicks stated in his recent Lynda Woodruff
51 lecture, if we are truly serious about changing the diversity of our profession so that it is inclusive of the
52 populations that we treat, then we must begin by recognizing that this change will not come without
53 targeted efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of DPT students.

54 With few exceptions, past efforts to increase the diversity of DPT students and academic faculty have been
55 largely unsuccessful, especially if we consider the aggregate numbers. To properly prescribe how we
56 successfully move forward in this new effort, we must consider why those past efforts failed to bring about
57 significant change. Previous initiatives were well intentioned, sincere, and logically planned. They did not,
58 however, establish equity, diversity, and inclusion as primary goals of ACAPT, they did not sufficiently
59 empower a group of leaders to carry out these initiatives, and they did not commit significant financial
60 resources to the task. It is noteworthy that equity, diversity, and inclusion are not even mentioned in
61 ACAPT's by-laws, mission, vision, and core values, and they are given only brief mention in its strategic
62 plan.

63 When we do not develop clear goals that are highlighted amongst top priorities, we should not be surprised
64 by our failure. When time is crunched and resources are stretched thin, these are the goals that are left
65 behind. Without leaders who are empowered at the highest levels of the organization to maintain focus on
66 these goals, other issues and initiatives will threaten to push them aside. And achieving anything of value
67 comes at a price. When we do not commit the financial resources that are necessary to reach these goals,
68 we should not be surprised by our failure.

69 Why does this motion call for a council? The time has come to include equity, diversity, and inclusion
70 among the highest priorities of ACAPT. Let us state that in a different way. If DPT programs are not
71 increasing their diversity and commitment to equity and inclusion, then ACAPT is failing as an
72 organization. To reverse our record of failure, *we must make a fundamental change to the structure of the*
73 *organization*. This motion calls for the creation of a National Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council
74 (NEDIC) – a council within a council. This would be a permanent structural change to the governance of
75 ACAPT. Task forces, committees, and consortia are fine, but they are subsidiary structures whose purposes
76 are not central to the organization's mission. Creating a council of equity, diversity and inclusion elevates
77 these organizational values into a special governance structure that is accountable for leadership and
78 implementation of the vision and mission of ACAPT.

79 The members of NEDIC would be elected, not appointed. Elected members have authority, credibility and,
80 most important, accountability. The proposed Council will foster the emergence of younger Black and
81 brown leaders and will give them the resources they need to move our profession forward. The recently
82 formed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Consortium has already begun the process of fostering
83 leadership development. The DEI Consortium should play a major role in the formation of the proposed
84 Council. It will partner with the ACAPT Board to develop an implementation plan. After formation of
85 NEDIC, the DEI Consortium will continue to play an important role within ACAPT. In particular, its
86 membership will inform and support NEDIC, and it will provide an infrastructure to support the emergence
87 of new leadership.

88 NEDIC will have a powerful voice on the Board of Directors, by virtue of having two members designated
89 as voting members of the Board. NEDIC will also have its own dedicated funding so it will not be
90 dependent on the ACAPT Board for its basic functions, although this does not prevent the ACAPT Board
91 from making additional funds available for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

92 Some might argue that an additional Diversity supplement added to member dues would pose a hardship at
93 a time when many educational institutions are challenged financially. Nevertheless, at the current level of
94 ACAPT dues, the proposed tax would require an additional \$500 per program. Even though we are all
95 hurting financially, it is imperative that we go beyond written expressions of support and make a material
96 commitment to increasing diversity. Surely our institutions can afford \$500 more a year for equity,
97 diversity, and inclusion. Given current membership numbers that would provide approximately \$120,000
98 annually for the Council to begin its work. These funds would allow the Council to measure and publish



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC PHYSICAL THERAPY

99 diversity data, collaborate with leadership in other healthcare professions, work with APTA to develop
100 outreach programming for prospective students, and develop programming specifically for ACAPT
101 programs. A key benefit of secure funding for the proposed Council would be the ability to provide
102 dedicated staff support to the Council, something that consortia lack.

103 At this critical moment in history, our faculty and students look to us, the leadership of academic physical
104 therapy. Let us use our past failures to inform how we can be successful in doing our part to end racial
105 injustice in this country. With direction, power, and financial resources, we can make a difference in our
106 profession – to bring about a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community within our educational
107 programs and ultimately bring us closer to providing equitable health care to our patients.

108
109 **CURRENT POSITION/STANDARD/GUIDELINE/POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

110 There are currently no positions, standards, guidelines, or policy/procedures on this issue.

111
112 **RELATED POSITION/STANDARD/GUIDELINE/POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

113 There are currently no related positions, standards, guidelines, or policy/procedures on this issue.
114
115