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Office of the President
June 14, 2005

Members, Board of Trustees:

DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY DEGREE

Recommendation: that the Board of Trustees approve the establishment of a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree program in the College of Health Sciences.

Background: The profession of physical therapy has been undergoing a significant shift in the locus of the professional educational programs during the last ten years. Increasingly the programs have been enhanced to award the DPT with more than half of the accredited programs now being DPT in orientation. The impetus for this process is multifactorial and includes physical therapists providing direct access to patients. This necessitates the aforementioned enhanced curricular requirements in differential diagnosis, pharmacology, gerontology, administration, public health, and prevention/wellness domains. The University of Kentucky Physical Therapy faculty members have carefully considered the national trends and have designed a DPT program utilizing existing strengths and curricular offerings to provide an efficient and effective program for the Commonwealth and for future students.

The DPT is a professional degree designed to create the clinician or practitioner of physical therapy. Professional DPT programs will more appropriately reflect the scope, depth, and breadth required for current and future practice; will provide a strong educational background that should better enable the graduates to successfully enter clinical practice to examine, evaluate, prognose, and intervene in the management of impairments, functional limitations, and disabilities of all body systems; will facilitate consumer awareness and recognition of the expected clinical role for physical therapist; will facilitate professional interactions and enhance research opportunities; and will enable the clinicians to better provide care and to advocate for and represent patient needs to external parties.

This program has the approval of the Graduate Council and Senate Council and has completed the forty-five day review by the Council on Postsecondary Education. The Interim Provost of the university supports this recommendation.

Action taken: Approved Disapproved Other _____