

# UNLV

## Physical Therapy

**Program Name:** Department of Physical Therapy (differential fee increase)

**Degree:** Doctor of Physical Therapy

**Unit:** School of Integrated Health Sciences

**Request:** Proposal to increase the differential program fees, originally established in Spring 2012. The proposed adjustment includes increasing the differential tuition rate from \$239.50 per credit to \$325.00 per credit.

**Fiscal Impact:** The proposed increase in differential tuition from \$239.50 to \$325.00 per credit for the DPT program is projected to generate \$1.75 million annually, assuming full enrollment and retention of 48 students per cohort across three years.

This adjustment addresses a \$150,000 budget shortfall and ensures the program's financial sustainability while maintaining accreditation and educational quality.

Physical Therapy is currently operating in a deficit and is drawing down resources from reserves. If the fees are not increased, the program will go cash-negative shortly after the end of the FY25's first quarter. Market conditions require salary increases to remain competitive for qualified personnel. Physical Therapy is limited to 48 students per year (or 144 students for all three years of the program) by their accrediting agency. The program is unable to increase enrollment numbers to increase revenue, therefore, the request is to increase the student fees to a sustainable level.

Executive Summary - FY24	A	B	C
UNLV Physical Therapy Program - Differential Fees:			
	FY24 Actuals	*FY25 Projected Actuals	FY26 Forecast/Plan
Beginning Balance	177,693	135,967	-
Student Fees Collected	1,286,867	1,164,755	1,747,200
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>1,464,560</b>	<b>1,300,722</b>	<b>1,747,200</b>
Salaries & Benefits	1,069,619	1,060,087	1,258,130
Operating	65,438	65,921	100,000
Financial Aid	193,536	174,713	262,080
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>1,328,593</b>	<b>1,300,722</b>	<b>1,620,210</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>135,967</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>126,990</b>
Ending Balance as % of Revenue	11%	0%	7%

\*The shortfall in FY25 revenue necessitated the reassignment of salaries for two faculty members to another account's budget, and this reduction is reflected in the FY25 Projected Actuals listed above.

## Department of Physical Therapy, School of Integrated Health Sciences Proposal to Increase Differential Fee Amount

### I. General Information

Program Name: Department of Physical Therapy

Degree: Doctor of Physical Therapy

Unit: School of Integrated Health Sciences      Proposer's Name: Merrill Landers

Campus Phone: 702-895-1377      Email Address: merrill.landerson@unlv.edu

### II. Justification for Differential Tuition

Differential tuition was originally justified and approved for the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program when it was approved in 2010. Students in the program have been paying differential tuition since 2012. This request is to increase the differential tuition to address the financial challenges that the DPT program faces while continuing to provide high-quality education to the students. With salary increases from unprecedented cost of living adjustments (COLA) approved by the Board of Regents for FY24 and FY25, promotions, increases in fringe benefit rates, and additional part-time instructor (PTI) payments, there will be a \$150,000 budget shortfall by the end of fiscal year 2025. The program does not want to raise differential tuition, especially since one of the selling points of our program is that we are a reasonably priced program; however, the current funding model is no longer sustainable. We are proposing an increase of the per credit differential tuition from \$239.50 per credit to \$325.00 per credit. This proposed differential tuition of \$325 will increase the cost of attendance by \$9,576 over the three years of the program (or \$3,192 per year).

In regards to the current budget shortfall situation, it should be noted that during the budget crisis in FY21, the program lost one state-funded faculty line that was vacant at the time the budget reduction proposals were requested by the Office of the Governor (seven of the department faculty positions were funded by the state and six funded by differential tuition in 2020). The loss of the vacant state position put the program in a difficult position as it was accredited for thirteen faculty. Subsequently, the program was put on probation by our accrediting body, Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), until we hired a thirteenth faculty member. Because we could not recover the state faculty line, differential tuition funding was used to support the position in order to remove the program from probation. Unfortunately, this put the program in a much tighter financial situation, which has been exacerbated by the 12% COLA increase in FY24, several faculty promotions, and another 11% COLA increase in FY25.

### III. Student Involvement

The proposal to increase the Physical Therapy differential fee was presented to class leadership at a program meeting on March 22, 2024 to discuss making financial cuts in several areas of the program. The leadership took it to their classes and brought the information back to the faculty at the April 19, 2024 meeting. None of the students, including the cohort leadership, are happy about the programmatic cuts that have already been made to address the budget problem. In addition, none of them are happy about the anticipated tuition increase;

however, when presented with the facts of the situation (financial shortfall), they understand the rationale and necessity for the proposed increase.

#### IV. Special Course Fees

Due to significant lab, equipment, and consumables including cadavers, the following special course fees must stay in place to support student learning.

Course Number & Name	Board Approved Fee	Campus Approved Fee
DPT 730 – Foundations of Observation and Assessment		\$50.00
DPT 744 – Gross Anatomy I	\$450.00	
DPT 745 – Gross Anatomy II	\$450.00	
DPT 750 – Prosthetics and Orthotics	\$25.00	
DPT 752 – Modalities		\$20.00
DPT 757 – Wound Care	\$65.00	
DPT 761 – Supervised Clinical Education I		\$50.00
DPT 762 – Supervised Clinical Education II		\$50.00
DPT 763 – Supervised Clinical Education III		\$50.00
DPT 764 – Supervised Clinical Education IV		\$50.00
DPT 765 – Supervised Clinical Education V		\$50.00
DPT 770L – Acute Care and Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation Lab	\$100.00	
DPT 785 – Musculoskeletal III – Rehabilitation of the Spine and Extremities		\$25.00
DPT 786L – Neurologic Rehabilitation Lab	\$60.00	

#### V. High Demand Programs:

- Program enrollments for the most recent 5 years of headcount enrollment information for majors or levels appropriate for the differential fee request.

Table 1. DPT Program Headcount Enrollments FY2020 – FY2024

DPT Program Headcount Enrollments FY2020 – FY2024					
Academic Level (undergrad, graduate, professional)	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
Graduate	138	140	142	146	143

- Program Demand – based on number of applicants, number admitted and number enrolled for the most recent five academic years.

Table 2. DPT Student Admissions for Academic Years 2020 – 2024

DPT Student Admissions AY2020 – AY2024					
Academic Year (AY)	Number of applicants	Number admitted	Percent applicants admitted	Number enrolled	Percent of applicants enrolled
AY 2020	383	69	18.02%	48	12.53%
AY 2021	461	81	17.57%	51	11.06%
AY 2022	313	85	27.16%	49	15.65%
AY 2023	200	68	34.00%	49	24.50%
AY 2024	157	75	47.77%	49	31.21%

c. How many students can be admitted in any semester?

We are limited by our accrediting agency (CAPTE) to 48 students per year. If we want to increase that number, we will need to submit a substantive change report, which is a considerable undertaking. Moreover, we do not have the space for more students, nor the faculty numbers to maintain accreditation mandated student ratios, nor enough clinical sites for clinical education. Also, you will notice that we have enrolled more than 48 students over the last few years. Those are readmitted students (i.e., students separated from the program for academic or personal reasons who have been readmitted to the program) and they do not count toward the 48 total per cohort.

d. Supporting narrative regarding demand:

Demand for physical therapy programs across the country is decreasing and this trend has been occurring for about seven years now. This is a nationwide trend and problem. Regardless of the milieu that caused this problem, it means that recruiting students is going to be a bigger focus going forward. This is one of the reasons why the faculty and the department chair are against raising the differential tuition since one of our main selling points to prospective students is that we are a reasonably-priced program. With the proposed increase, we will no longer be able to use affordability as one of the top reasons to attend UNLV. It is a major concern for us and we strongly prefer not to increase the differential tuition. Unfortunately, there are no other suitable alternatives to mitigate our current budget shortfalls, unless NSHE steps in and provides additional state support for our program, and we have reluctantly agreed that this is the best path going forward.

## VI. High Cost Programs

a. Supporting narrative regarding current program costs

The DPT program has already been deemed a high cost program as is evidenced by our history as a differentially-funded program. We continue to have expenses that many other programs do not have. We have dedicated classrooms and labs that have a lot of specialized equipment and, as a result, we are responsible for all classroom-related expenses and do not receive additional support for any of those classroom-associated

expenses (e.g., remodeling, audiovisual equipment, desks, plinths, chairs, specialized equipment). We depend very heavily on differential tuition to help with teaching-related expenses and up to this point we have been able to keep up with our peer and aspirational peer programs. However, recently, we hired three educational consultants (department chairs from 3 different programs) and one of their conclusions was that our dedicated space (i.e., classrooms and labs) is no longer contemporary with our peers. We need differential tuition to not only improve our student educational experiences but also to maintain and improve the current space we have to stay contemporary with our aspirational peers and to continue to be attractive to prospective students.

- b. Comparison to external peer programs (Provide data of peer institution programs cost per AAFTE-Annual Average FTE and any discussion of program needs and growth.)

In the table below, we have compared our program to our regional, aspirational peers. Our aspirational peer institutions are all ranked higher than UNLV in the U.S. News and World Report (USNWR) rankings and they are our biggest competitors for the top students. We also know that they are competitors because we track the matriculation choices of students who do not accept our offer. Based on that, our biggest competitors (in terms of lost students) are the University of Utah and the University of Colorado.

UNLV is currently ranked number 44 of 245 physical therapy programs (U.S. News and World Report) and we are a strong program but we do not have the academic reputation of the programs below. Subsequently, we have had to rely on our program being a great value among the top programs in the Western US. We are also the #7 ranked program in the Western United States. You will note that we are currently the most reasonably priced program (considering both in-state and out-of-state tuition) of the five comparative programs listed in the table below. Unfortunately, with our new proposal, we will be more expensive than Utah and will be approaching Colorado. We should also note that there are several other programs in the Western US that are currently much cheaper than UNLV. Those programs include the following: University of New Mexico, University of Montana, University of Colorado Mesa, Northern Arizona, Eastern Washington, and Idaho State. In addition, with the new differential fee, it will push our tuition higher than University of Oregon – Cascades, San Diego State, Fresno State, Cal State Long Beach, Cal State Northridge, and Sacramento State. This means that we will lose our competitive advantage of more than just our aspirational peers and will result in a big shift of our recruitment strategy. In addition, UNR is starting a physical therapy program and this represents another challenge in recruiting the best and brightest Nevada applicants. UNR is currently our second largest feeder school, after UNLV, it will result in a significant loss of applicants. At this point, we do not know what their tuition will be, but it represents a significant challenge for our program going forward.

Table 3. Comparative Physical Therapy Program Costs

Physical Therapy Program and Rank	Total Resident Cost	Total Non-Resident Cost	Note
University of Nevada, Las Vegas Ranked #44	\$81,716.59	\$133,542.59	Total includes health insurance
University of Nevada, Las Vegas (with differential fee increase)	<b>\$91,292.59</b>	<b>\$143,118.59</b>	<b>Total includes health insurance</b>
University of Utah Ranked #11	\$80,514.02	\$155,208.23	Annual health insurance not listed
University of Colorado Ranked #11	\$90,435.00	\$167,807.00	
University of Southern California Ranked #6	\$218,086.00	Not Applicable	Private institution rates
University of California, San Francisco Ranked #21	\$123,468.00	\$160,203.00	Total includes health insurance
University of Washington Ranked #29	\$108,026.00	\$166,391.00	Annual health insurance not listed

For additional context, the national mean for public in-state DPT programs is \$73,973 (2024 Aggregate Program Data Report). The following table includes the means and medians of PT program by type of institution. With the proposed increase, we will be in the upper range of public in-state programs.

#### Cost of Professional Education

Table 4. Average Annual Tuition, Fees, and Other Costs by Type of Institution for Students Graduating in 2023

		Public In-State*	Public Out-of-State*	Private
Annual tuition	Range	\$4,316-\$87,400	\$6,625-\$143,200	\$22,850-\$112,101
	Median	\$20,640	\$35,697	\$39,976
	Mean	\$23,270	\$40,031	\$43,222
	STDEV	\$14,014	\$21,000	\$14,923
Annual fees	Range	\$0-\$17,164	\$0-\$17,164	\$0-\$50,000
	Median	\$2,822	\$2,822	\$1,200
	Mean	\$3,233	\$3,233	\$2,798
	STDEV	\$2,623	\$2,623	\$6,142
Other program expenses	Range	\$0-\$92,331	\$0-\$92,331	\$0-\$54,152
	Median	\$3,415	\$3,415	\$3,091
	Mean	\$6,329	\$6,329	\$4,709
	STDEV	\$11,025	\$11,025	\$6,902
Total cost of professional program	Range	\$17,516-\$135,188	\$37,437-\$217,070	\$70,128-\$213,423
	Median	\$73,995	\$115,016	\$117,975
	Mean	\$73,973	\$118,371	\$124,664
	STDEV	\$22,629	\$30,095	\$26,374

- c. The table below contains the expense projection for FY25 and the previous three years cost for the program.

Year	Full-Time Faculty	Part-Time Faculty	Equipment Costs	Operating Costs	Total Program-Related Costs	# of Students	Cost per student
FY25 projected	\$1,190,600	\$40,000	\$0	\$100,000	\$1,330,600	142	\$9,370
FY24	\$1,042,543	27,076	\$0	\$75,461	\$1,145,080	143	\$8,008
FY23	\$938,518	\$39,536	\$1,862	\$139,724	\$1,119,640	146	\$7,669
FY22	\$912,446	\$71,475	\$9,032	\$154,615	\$1,147,568	142	\$8,081

## VII. Projected Annual Revenues and Expenditures

Total Program Credits	# of Students	Projected Revenue per year
112 credits at \$325/credit	48	\$1,747,200 per year* (includes all three years of students and assumes 100% retention)
Average annual projected revenue		\$1,747,200 per year (minus 15% scholarship)

\*See Appendix A for revenue calculation.

Projected Revenue		Projected Expenses		
	Average annual projected revenue	Financial aid at 15% of projected revenue	Program-related expenses at 85% of projected revenue	Total
Undergraduate	0	0	0	0
Graduate	\$1,747,200	\$262,080	\$1,485,120	\$1,747,200

- a. Summary of Use of Projected Differential Fee Funds Noted Above

The differential fees will be used as they were originally proposed in 2010. We are not proposing any changes in how those funds are distributed and used for faculty and staff salaries and fringe, program operations, equipment and scholarships. We expect some faculty promotions in the coming years which include a 10% salary increase in addition to some equipment replacement and facility improvements and will need sufficient budget for these expenses moving forward.

- b. Distribution of Fees and Tuition – Effective Summer 2025

	Upper Division Undergraduate	Graduate
Undergraduate Financial Aid	15% of Differential Fee	NA
Graduate Financial Aid	N/A	15% of Differential Fee
Program-related Expenses	85% of Differential Fee	85% of Differential Fee

## VIII. Proposed Differential Fee

- a. Differential fee levels effective Summer 2025.
- b. Differential fees apply to the courses listed below.

Discipline	Course Prefix	Course Level	Amount (per credit hour)
Physical Therapy	DPT	500-700	\$325.00



## Appendix A. Projected DPT Revenues with Proposed Increase to \$325/credit based on Full Cohorts of 48 Students/Cohort

Summer						
Course	Add. Fee/Credit	Credits	# Students	Total	Account	
726	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
727	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
740	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
744	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
745	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
752	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
761	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
762	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
772	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
789	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
744L	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
745L	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
752L	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
23.00			<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 358,800.00</b>		

Cohort 1  
Cohort 2  
Cohort 3

Fall						
Course	Add. Fee/Credit	Credits	# Students	Total	Account	
720	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
730	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
741	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
742	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
746	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
763	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
764	\$ 325.00	6.00	48	\$ 93,600.00	PG11686	
774	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
780	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	Spring second year
785	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
786	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
790	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
791	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
730L	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
746L	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
785L	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
786L	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
46.00			<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 717,600.00</b>		

Spring						
Course	Add. Fee/Credit	Credits	# Students	Total	Account	
732	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	Summer second year
748	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
749	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
750	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
754	\$ 325.00	4.00	48	\$ 62,400.00	PG11686	
756	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	Fall second year
757	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
758	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
759	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
765	\$ 325.00	6.00	48	\$ 93,600.00	PG11686	
770	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
770L	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
798	\$ 325.00	3.00	48	\$ 46,800.00	PG11686	
732L	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
735L	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
749L	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
750L	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
754L	\$ 325.00	2.00	48	\$ 31,200.00	PG11686	
759L	\$ 325.00	1.00	48	\$ 15,600.00	PG11686	
43.00			<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 670,800.00</b>		

Differential Fees Grant Total	\$ 1,747,200.00
Less 15% for Scholarships	\$ 262,080.00
	<b>\$ 1,485,120.00</b>