

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA  
Academic Programs / Strategic Planning Committee  
December 6, 2007**

**SUBJECT:** Doctor of Physical Therapy at Florida Gulf Coast University

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**PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

Consider for Approval the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) at Florida Gulf Coast University, CIP Code 51.2308

**AUTHORITY FOR BOARD OF GOVERNORS ACTION**

Section 7(d), Art. IX, Florida Constitution  
Board of Governors Regulation 8.011

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) is requesting authority to convert its Physical Therapy program to the doctoral level. The proposed DPT would replace the Master of Physical Therapy (MPT) degree program currently accredited by The Commission on the Accreditation of Physical Therapist Education (CAPTE). The change of degree level is driven by the need to remain competitive in student recruitment and also to be prepared when CAPTE begins to require doctoral level programs for accreditation. The curriculum for the DPT would consist of 115 credit hours, distributed across six tracks of required courses. The proposed program length and curriculum compare favorably with programs previously implemented at Florida universities, as well as programs implemented in other states. It would be necessary for FGCU to gradually increase the number of faculty as the DPT is implemented, with two 12-month full-time physical therapy faculty by Fall 2008, and two affiliate faculty by Fall 2009. If the DPT is approved, the first DPT students would be enrolled starting in Fall 2008.

**Observations and relevant page numbers in staff analysis:**

- This program would be the first doctorate at Florida Gulf Coast University. (page 2)
- More than 80 percent of the physical therapy programs nationwide have made the conversion to the DPT. (page 2)
- Evidence is provided that not offering the DPT is affecting the university's ability to compete for students. (page 7)
- Employment of physical therapists is expected to increase 27 percent or more through 2014. (page 7)

- With the exception of FGCU and FAMU, all existing Physical Therapy programs within the State University System have converted to the DPT (UF, USF, FIU, UCF, and UNF). (page 8)
- New dollars identified in the budget are associated with expected enrollment growth. (page 8)
- Converting to the DPT is expected to improve efficiency and increase revenue, whereas the larger student cohort groups would reduce the cost per FTE. (page 9)
- The program would generate more fundable credit hours per student headcount than most other graduate-level programs, but this scenario would not necessarily result in additional funding. (page 9)
- The expectation that FGCU could double its physical therapy cohort group size from 12 to 24 once it moves to the DPT may be somewhat optimistic. (page 9)

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**Supporting Documentation Included:** New Degree Program Staff Analysis

**Facilitators/Presenters:** Richard Stevens, Director of Academic and Student Affairs