



Clinical Competency Certificate

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the Clinical Competency Certificate?

The certificate program provides licensed physical therapists and physical therapist assistants with a comprehensive study of the fundamental knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to provide safe, quality evidence-based patient care using the aquatic environment. This is the only certificate program sponsored by a component of the APTA specifically designed for the aquatic physical therapy professional.

I am not a licensed physical therapist or physical therapist assistant. Can I complete the Clinical Competency Certificate program?

Our courses are specific to the physical therapy profession. You are welcome to take any of the on-demand courses offered in our education center, but please note that the CEU that are issued on a certificate of completion likely won't be applicable for your profession's license renewal. Also, the 3-day in-person lab component of the clinical competency certificate is ONLY for licensed physical therapist and physical therapist assistants. Those who are not licensed physical therapists or physical therapist assistants are not eligible to receive the overall clinical competency certificate or complete the program.

What do I have to do to complete the program?

There are 7 e-learning courses and a 3-day in-person pool course to complete the entire certificate series. Each e-learning course is approximately 2-3 hours in length, includes a post-test and can be taken in any order. Three e-learning courses (Aquatic Physics, Physiology of Immersion and Critical Thinking) are required before registration is allowed for the 3-day pool course. The pool course will consist of a practical and written exam. Each e-learning course requires a passing test score of 70%. Once all e-learning courses and the 3-day pool course are completed with passing scores, you will receive your certificate of completion from the program.

What subjects are covered in the certificate program?

E-learning Courses

Historical Perspective of Aquatic Physical Therapy
Aquatic Physics
Physiology of Immersion
Critical Thinking and Aquatic Interventions
Pool Chemical and Safety
Risk Management Issues
Aquatic Billing and Documentation

3-day In-person Pool Course – Aquatic Clinical Applications Lab
Aquatic Clinical Applications

If I complete this program, will I be a certified Aquatic physical therapist or physical therapist assistant?

No. You will earn the APTA Academy of Aquatic Physical Therapy Clinical Competency Certificate which is an assessment-based certificate in aquatic physical therapy. There is not a credential associated with completing the APTA Academy Of Aquatic Physical Therapy Clinical Competency Certificate as this program is not recognized by the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialists (ABPTS).

Why did the Academy of Aquatic Physical Therapy decide to create this certificate program instead of a certification program?

The Academy of Aquatic Physical Therapy used membership surveys, practice analysis, and multiple task forces to explore the feasibility of creating a specialist certification, a fellowship/mentorship program, or a certificate program. After extensive consideration, it was decided that this certificate program best met the current needs of the academy and members.

How much does it cost?

[See here](#) for more information.

Can I take individual courses without taking the entire certificate program?

You may take the e-learning courses individually without the intention of completing the certificate program. However, to take the 3-day pool course you must complete 3 required e-learning modules (Physics, Physiology of Immersion, and Critical Thinking).

I am a student; can I participate in the certificate program?

Students may take the e-learning courses but are not eligible to register for the pool lab course until licensed as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.

How long do I have to complete the APTA Academy of Aquatic Physical Therapy Clinical Competency Certificate program?

There used to be a 2-year time frame due to the limitations of our former learning management software. However, with our newest technology, there is no timeframe because the system will allow you to go back to watch the videos to get a refresher as needed. This is good news because we occasionally update our modules with new information and you'll be able to stay up to date at no additional charge, even after you've completed the certificate program!

Can I exempt out of any of the courses if I have taken similar courses in the past?

No, only physical therapist or physical therapist assistants who have completed all the required courses may pursue the APTA Academy of Aquatic Physical Therapy Clinical Competency Certificate. The APTA Academy of Aquatic Physical Therapy Clinical Competency Certificate reflects completion of specific didactic coursework, successful passing of multiple written tests at the end of the each e-learning course and successful check-off of essential skills during 3-day pool course. Therefore, we can only confidently award a APTA Academy Of Aquatic Physical Therapy Clinical Competency Certificate to those who have completed this program in its entirety.

When and where will the pool course be offered? Where can I register or find more info?

Dates and locations of the pool course are listed at www.aquaticpt.org.

Can you give a general sense of the pool course hours and activities?

The course runs 2 full days (Fri and Sat – 8 am-6:30 pm) and one short day (Sunday 8 am-3:30 pm). We spend roughly 10 total hours in land lecture and 14 total hours in pool lab. The class size varies based on host pool size. Our smallest class is 12 and largest class size is 30. Staff ratio of about 1:12 students.

I want to train my entire staff and save money on travel expenses. Can you bring the Clinical Competency program to my aquatic facility?

We sure can! What a great way to build a strong team! [Learn more here.](#)

Why don't you all ever have courses in my state/near me/in the _____ region?

We are glad you asked! We are always looking for new host sites. The ones we contract with were found by word of mouth. Our host sites have certain sized pools and a land-based classroom. We offer an honorarium, and 2 complementary registrations. If you know of a pool in your area that would be interested in hosting the 3-day in-person pool course, please [let us know about it.](#)