



**NPTE® Quarterly Faculty Newsletter**

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**The mission of the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy is to protect the public by providing service and leadership that promote safe and competent physical therapy practice.**

The NPTE Quarterly Faculty Newsletter is published by the Federation (FSBPT®) as one mechanism to communicate with educators in PT and PTA programs. This effort to provide ongoing communication includes current information and updates on the NPTE as well as information on other regulatory issues that might impact or be of interest to program educators.

Please share this newsletter with other PT or PTA educators.

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**Working the System – A Comparison of Online Continuing Competence Applications**

In recent years a proliferation of online systems have been developed for the purpose of recording, tracking and – in some instances, reporting - continuing education (continuing competence) units for a range of licensed professions. As a faculty member of a PT or PTA program, you have likely received marketing emails for these systems. FSBPT® launched its own system for physical therapy, aPTitude®, in 2010. With several systems from which to choose, how might your current students and future PTs and PTAs select the one that best serves their needs? A comparison of the systems using the criteria of features and benefits yields some insight into their common utilities, and reveals the unique features some systems offer.

Read the rest of the article [here](#).

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### **This Quarter's Question: What impact have the 2016 eligibility rules had on the NPTE?**

The goal of the 2016 changes to eligibility rules was to improve NPTE security and validity by limiting access to the NPTE to candidates who were qualified and licensable. The changes implemented in 2016 included a lifetime limit of 6 attempts at each NPTE level (PT or PTA) and a lifetime limit of two very low scores (400 or below). These changes were recommended by a diverse panel of stakeholders, including educators, PT professionals, and representatives of licensing boards. Along with these changes, FSBPT began to contact candidates after two unsuccessful attempts or one very low score to emphasize the need for substantial remediation.

After the lifetime limit of six attempts was announced in late 2014, pass rates for CAPTE-educated candidates on their 6<sup>th</sup> attempt of the NPTE-PT jumped from 24% to 35%, and further improved after implementation to 44% in 2016 and 2017. In 2016 and 2017, pass rates in the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> attempts came up approximately 13% overall. Very low scores have dropped substantially as well, from around 200 per year in 2013 and 2014 to around 55 per year in 2016 and 2017.

Historically, candidates at the NPTE-PTA level have all come from CAPTE-accredited institutions, so we have not seen major differences in the pass rates for PTA candidates, and very low scores are very rare for the NPTE-PTA. Pass rates for the NPTE-PTA have risen about 5% between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> attempts.

These efforts show that candidates are taking the NPTE more seriously at each attempt and potentially entering the profession more quickly after graduation. As an ancillary benefit, the cumulative effect of these efforts is to make approximately 200 more test-taking seats available for each NPTE-PT administration each year.

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### **What Students Need to Know: Is there any benefit to purchasing an individual version of PEAT if I have already taken the Academic version of PEAT through my school?**

The version of PEAT® available for purchase by individuals is different from the version available through your school. For candidates who need extra practice or simply want to get more comfortable with the NPTE timing and clinical reasoning questions, there may be some benefit for taking an additional two forms of PEAT. Like the Academic Version, the version available for individual purchase will provide two forms and a score that is based on the NPTE scale, which is highly correlated to performance on the NPTE.

Our research with NPTE scores shows that candidates who are initially unsuccessful gain about 25-30 points between the first and second attempts, and about 5-10 points in each successive attempt through the 6<sup>th</sup> attempt. A similar pattern likely exists for PEAT practice. So candidates likely can benefit from additional practice, but the value of practice diminishes in each successive attempt without additional preparation.

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### **Get Involved!**

Learn how to become an NPTE item writer or a member of an exam committee.

### **Exam Committees**

One of the best mechanisms for understanding and providing input into the NPTE development process is to volunteer on the exam committees. Over 50% of the participants on the NPTE development committees are educators and over 60% of the item writers are educators. While educator

representation on the committees must be balanced with other practice settings, we welcome your participation.

To qualify to be on an NPTE committee, you generally need prior item writing experience. You also should be able to work as a team and understand and support the mission of FSBPT.

### **Volunteer opportunities**

You'll find the opportunity to become an item writer for the National Physical Therapy Exam at [www.fsbpt.org/Volunteer](http://www.fsbpt.org/Volunteer).

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### **Useful Pages**

Visit the [FSBPT website](http://www.fsbpt.org) for information on a range of topics.

- **aPTitude:** [www.fsbpt.org/aPTitude](http://www.fsbpt.org/aPTitude)
  - **Candidate Handbook:** [www.fsbpt.org/NPTE/Handbook](http://www.fsbpt.org/NPTE/Handbook)
  - **Educator's page:** Look for the "Educators" link in the blue ribbon
  - **Exam Candidates page:** Look for the "Exam Candidates" link in the blue ribbon
  - **Licensing Authorities:** Scroll down to "Top Resources" and click "Licensing Authorities Contact Information"
  - **Licensure Reference Guide:** Scroll down to "Top Resources" and click "Licensure Reference Guide"
  - **NPTE Content Outline:** Click on "Free Resources" in the black ribbon at the top of the page, go to "NPTE Development" and look for "NPTE content"
  - **Practice Exam and Assessment Tool (PEAT):** [www.fsbpt.org/PEAT](http://www.fsbpt.org/PEAT)
  - **Performance Feedback Report (PFR):** Click on "Our Services," then "Candidate Services" and look for "NPTE Performance Feedback Report" in the left hand table of contents
  - **Preparing Students for the NPTE:** Scroll down for the link on the right hand column
  - **School Interface:** Look for "Educators Login" in the top right corner
  - **Score reports (free):** Click "Customer Login," in the top right corner. Go to "Reports" and click "View All Reports" to view a free exam score report (available for 30 days starting 10 days after the exam date).
  - **Top Services:** Scroll down to "Top Services" to find links for "Status of My Request," "Practice Exam & Assessment Tool (PEAT)," "Score Transfer Service" and "Exam Withdrawal Request."
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## Staff

<b>If you have questions, challenges or ideas, we want to hear from you!</b>		
FSBPT (703) 299-3100   FCCPT (703) 684-8406 (Call FSBPT unless otherwise noted after name)		
<b>Contact Person</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Topics</b>
William A. Hatherill	Chief Executive Officer	FSBPT Issues
Mark Lane Susan Layton	Vice President Chief Operating Officer	General questions and feedback; research questions
Lorin Mueller, PhD	Managing Director of Assessment	Psychometrics, test development and construction
Christine Sousa	Managing Director of Exam Services	Exam administration issues, ADA
Jamie Nolan, FCCPT	Assistant Director of the Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy (FCCPT)	Foreign educated graduates
Rhonda Collins	Administrative Assistant	School reports: <a href="mailto:schoolreports@fsbpt.org">schoolreports@fsbpt.org</a>  Practice Exam and Assessment Tool (PEAT): <a href="mailto:peat@fsbpt.org">peat@fsbpt.org</a>