

# NPTE Outline

# About Me

- Will Crane PT, DPT, OCS
- Graduated in 2011
- Practicing PT, including former rehab director at a critical access hospital
- PT Final Exam est. 2012



# The NPTE Podcast



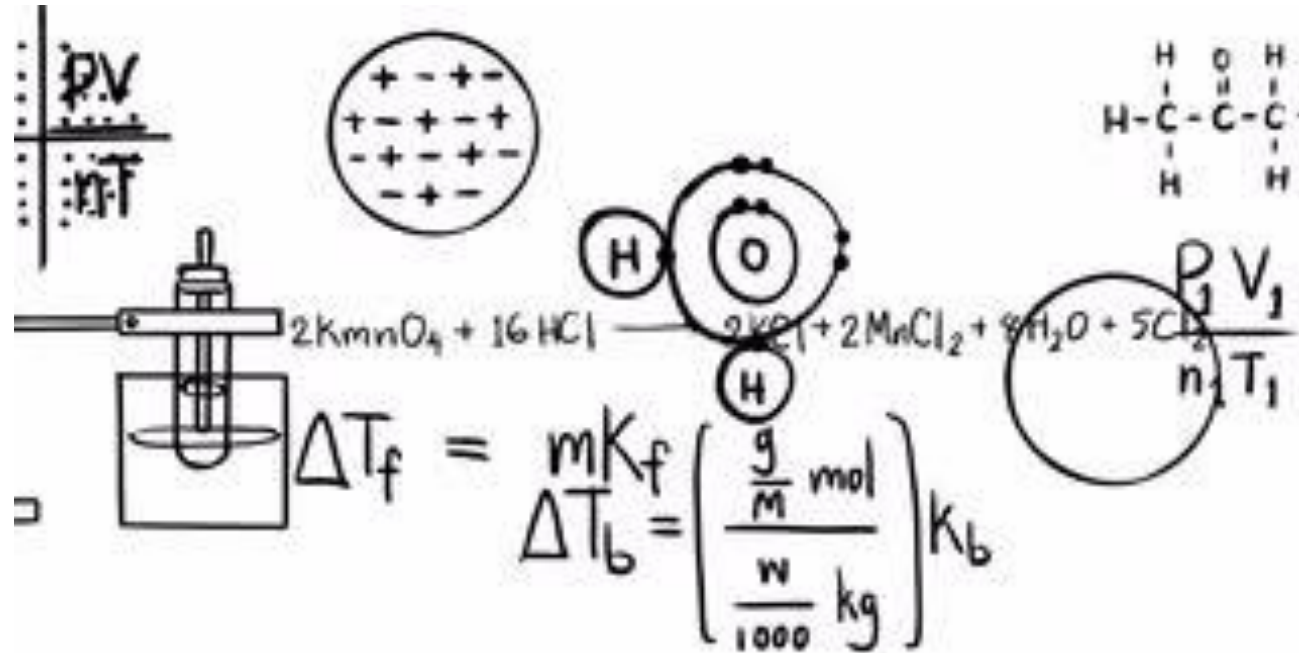
# Changes Affecting the NPTE

- Beginning with the January 2024 administration
  - PT updated exam design (NPTE-PT)
    - 225 items total. 180 scored + 45 unscored = 225 total
    - Up to 45 scenario-based items
    - Approximately 180 stand-alone multiple-choice items
      - Includes graphic, video, or text items
  - PTA updated exam design (NPTE-PTA)
    - 180 items total. 140 scored + 40 unscored = 180 total
    - Up to 35 scenario-based items
    - Approximately 145 stand-alone multiple-choice items
      - Includes graphic, video, or text items

# NPTE Changes at a Glance (2024 and beyond)

	PT Content (NPTE-PT)	PTA Content (NPTE-PTA)
Total Items	225	180
Scored Items	180	140
Unscored Items	45	40
Scenario-Based	Up to 45	Up to 35
Test Time	5 hours	4 hours
Scoring	600/800	600/800
Cost	\$485	\$485
Prometric Fee	\$100.30	\$82.60

# What is actually on the NPTE?



# PT Content Outline

NUMBER OF ITEMS (RANGE)				
BODY SYSTEM	Physical Therapy Examination	Foundations for Evaluation, Differential Diagnosis, & Prognosis	Interventions	TOTAL PER SYSTEM
Cardiovascular & Pulmonary Systems	7-8	7-9	8-10	22-27
Musculoskeletal System	14-18	15-18	15-18	44-54
Neuromuscular & Nervous Systems	13-16	13-16	13-16	39-48
Integumentary System	2-3	3-4	3-4	8-11
Metabolic & Endocrine Systems	–	2-3	2-3	4-6
Gastrointestinal System	1-2	1-2	1-2	3-6
Genitourinary System	0-1	1-2	1-2	2-5
Lymphatic System	1-2	1-2	2-3	4-7
System Interactions	–	8-10	–	8-10
<b>TOTAL ACROSS SYSTEMS</b>	<b>38-50</b>	<b>51-66</b>	<b>47-58</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>NONSYSTEM</b>				<b>TOTAL PER NONSYSTEM</b>
Equipment, Devices, & Technologies				5-6
Therapeutic Modalities				4-6
Safety & Protection				5-7
Professional Responsibilities				4-5
Research & Evidence-Based Practice				3-5
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>180</b>

# What is actually on the NPTE?

- Entry level (within 12 months of practice)
- Current content (recently published textbooks)



# Exam Development

- FSBPT:
  - The test is developed by a diverse set of item writers across the country in various practice settings
  - Each item is edited and analyzed in approximately 8 committees
  - Each item becomes a “pre-test item”
  - Analyzed via Item Response Theory for psychometric qualities



# Exam Development

- Grouped into 180 question “blocks,” or exam forms
- 180 scored questions + 45 unscored “pretest” items
- 5-10 different exam forms on any given test day
- Each form is then compared to previous forms for statistical validity and then scaled appropriately, using Item Response Theory
- Each test item is used only 1-2x before retirement
- 225 total items (PT)



# PT vs PTA

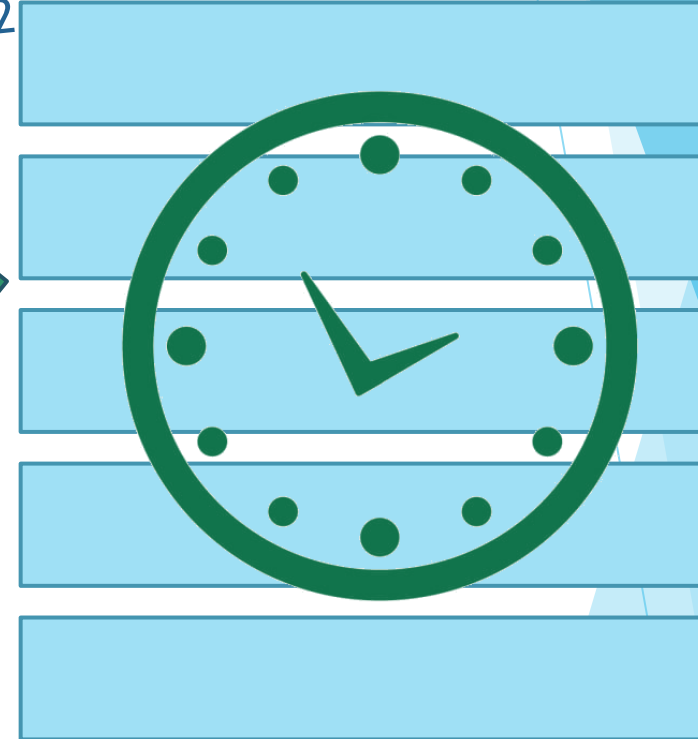
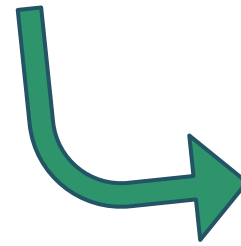
- Total
  - 225 items (PT), 5 sections
  - 180 items (PTA), 4 sections



# Exam Timing

- Standard time: 5 hours time bank
  - 5 sections x 45 questions
  - Target 1 hour per section
  - Approx. 80 seconds/item
    - Scenario-based items will take more time and stand-alone items will take less time
  - “Scheduled Break” after section 2
  - “Unscheduled Breaks” between any other section
  - Running clock shown in test window

Scheduled Break:  
15 min. after section 2



# Exam Structure

- 5 sections x 45 questions each (225 total)
- Can “strikethrough” or “mark” questions if desired
- Scratch paper available for making calculations or “braindumping”



# Exam Scoring

- Must have **600/800** scale score to pass the exam
  - Approximately 68.5% (66-70% range) 126/180 raw score
  - Same for every state board governed by FSBPT
  - Exam scoring is done electronically and automatically
  - Manual review only occurs if there was an incident at the test site or if there was an unusual answer pattern
  - “Score withheld” most commonly occurs after large score increase or irregular answer pattern
- No penalty for guessing





# NPTE Myths

**MYTHS**  
**BUSTED**



# NPTE MYTHS!

- FALSE:
  - ‘The test is “harder” in July and “easier” in January.’
  - ‘A score of **800/800** means you answered every question correct’
  - ‘There are “multiple correct answers” to each question’
  - ‘The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy is “out of touch” with reality’
  - ‘The test is purely academic’

# Conclusion