

Spotlight on College of Graduate and Professional Studies

**Keeping it professional:
CGPS moves at the rapid pace
of its students**

**BY LIZ MASSEY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW CUNNINGHAM**



Maria Altobello, Dean of Franklin Pierce's College of Graduate and Professional Studies (CGPS) says the college's reputation as "agile and entrepreneurial" is driven by a desire to meet the needs of adult learners in New Hampshire and the surrounding area, as well as students from around the country drawn to some of Pierce's most competitive master's and doctoral degrees.

"We want our students to stay here," she says. "We want to provide them with opportunities in order to do that, so we ask, 'What can we offer that's enticing, that will encourage them to stay [in New Hampshire] after graduation?'"

Altobello, who became dean in 2015, says this focus on the part of CGPS led to the development of a number of health care and business-oriented degrees and certificates. The Doctor of Physical Therapy degree program, which emerged at Franklin Pierce in the early 2000s, is an example of how Pierce leveraged its size and scale to benefit graduate students.

A strong emphasis on research and evidence-based practice is the backbone of the DPT program, accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). Assistant Professor Jenny Wasserman, who teaches at the Manchester campus, received a grant in 2016 from the women's health section of the American Physical Therapy Association to study effective treatments for chronic Caesarean section scar pain. Hers is the first study to be done on this topic and her

findings will provide evidence to support this novel treatment.

"Research projects like this help put Franklin Pierce on the map as a university at the forefront of physical therapy practice, while providing the students with fantastic opportunities to participate in clinical research," Wasserman says.

Olga McSorley, academic coordinator of clinical education and an assistant professor for the DPT program, identified community service as another factor that differentiates Franklin Pierce from other institutions.

"Our program embraces the value of community service and understands how it helps students as much as it helps the people or groups they serve," she explains.

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In all CGPS degree programs and certificates, things move quickly, according to Altobello.

"More things happen in less time here," she says. "We have the ability to launch a new program to respond to market needs within the same academic year, without skipping steps or cutting corners."

2012

Business Plus accelerated degree programs started (first undergraduate/graduate collaboration)



Ravens Athletics adds sprint football, men's and women's track and field, men's cross country and women's ice hockey to its programming, bringing the University's sports sponsorship up to 23 programs



Joshua Cleland:

Blending teaching, research and practice

Joshua Cleland says Franklin Pierce offered him a “perfect fit” early in his career, when he realized that he wanted to combine practice as a physical therapist with teaching and scholarly research.

The professor in Pierce’s Doctor of Physical Therapy program has indeed done all three. He teaches courses at the Manchester campus, has published more than 200 research studies in peer-reviewed journals and practices clinically at Concord Hospital. He’s been recognized with the Rothstein Golden Pen Award for Scientific Writing and the Rose Excellence in Research Award from the American Physical Therapy Association, among other honors.

Cleland says the development of his students in the program is always a motivator for him.

“It is a thrill to watch students progress from the first day of classes to the end of the program where they are providing quality care to patients,” he says.

The Pappas Health Sciences and Athletic Training Center opens

2013



Ravens Athletics adds women’s golf and bowling to its sports offerings

Wayne Pauley, '87, '07: Giving back to today's students

Wayne Pauley '87, '07 teaches a class on digital privacy. He used the convenience of Franklin Pierce's satellite campuses to finish his bachelor's degree in 1987, and to earn a master's degree in Information Technology Management in 2007.

Since then, he's completed a Ph.D. program, filed for 25 patents, and published a number of peer-reviewed journal articles. During his career, he's also worked in sales and IT for the Digital Equipment Corporation, Liberty Mutual and EMC Corp.

He is succinct when asked why he chose to become an

adjunct professor at Pierce.

"I felt it was time for me to give back, and I wanted to help young people understand what the field of technology has to offer them," he says.

He is quick to credit CGPS Dean Maria Altobello, who was a faculty member and his advisor during his master's degree program, with helping him achieve so much as an IT professional and scholar.

"Franklin Pierce and Dr. Altobello helped me continue to be relevant in an ever changing technology world, and helped me find my voice and drove me to work harder and become a successful leader in my community," he says.

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Jennifer Parent-Nichols '11: Every course is a work in progress

Jennifer Parent-Nichols '11, an assistant professor who completed her transitional DPT degree at Pierce in 2011, says she was attracted to the program initially because of the collegiality she saw between students and instructors.

"The culture of the DPT program at Franklin Pierce is one of collaboration and challenge," she says.

Pediatrics and concussion recovery form the focus of Parent-Nichols' research, and she has tapped her previous bachelor's degree in education to design DPT classes that create meaningful learning experiences for her students.

"I think every experience I have had shapes the way I design my courses," she asserts. "Every course is a work in progress."

She acknowledges that the health care workplace is constantly changing but says the students at Franklin Pierce will be ready.

"The rigor of the program prepares students to thoroughly examine and evaluate patients... and create innovative, evidence-based plans of care," she says. "The program at Franklin Pierce always has the patient at the center of care." 

2015

Public Health major introduced

Social Media and Emergent Technologies major introduced