

University of South Alabama
Department of Physical Therapy
Faculty Biographies

Dr. Dennis Fell is Chair of the Department. Achievements of the department include a successful entry-level DPT and the web-based tDPT program, and the recent move into the new Health Sciences building on main campus with wonderful updated space, including wireless Internet throughout. He is currently serving as Treasurer of the Neurology Section of APTA and nominating committee for the Alabama Chapter. He continues to see patients on a pro bono basis in the department, especially pediatric and adult neurology. In addition to teaching responsibilities at USA, he teaches a medical screening unit in the UAB DScPT program and the neurologic PNF unit for Western Carolina University. His areas of teaching and clinical expertise include neurologic examination and intervention (adult and pediatric). His research interests are educational methods, promoting the PT profession, and neurologic examination measures. In addition to presenting at an International PT conference in South Africa, and presenting on Web 2.0 Tools at the national APTA conference, he has recently served as visiting professor for two PT programs in South Korea.

Dr. Charles Gray continues into his 31st year with the department. Gross Anatomy remains the focus of his teaching and has been expanded in the DPT curriculum to a two semester sequence. He also contributes to the functional anatomy portions of the curriculum, MMT and goniometry, as well as units on prosthetics and orthotics and supervision of student research projects. His research interests include the "post polio syndrome", educational theory and anatomical variation. He recently received the post professional Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from Temple University. A major emphasis of the department is the development of an Alumni group to include our over 700 PT graduates especially as we approach our 30th anniversary and Dr. Gray is involved with that process. If you are an alumni of USAPT or have one in your department, he would love to hear from you.

Dr. Coral Gubler joined the faculty in of August, 2007. She earned a BS degree in biochemistry at Stony Brook University, a Master's degree in Physical Therapy at the University of Delaware, a Master's degree in Sports Medicine from the United States Sports Academy and a PhD at The University of Montana in Interdisciplinary Studies. She is a certified athletic trainer who, prior to returning to academia to complete her doctorate, practiced physical therapy for 10 years in many different settings including outpatient and inpatient orthopedics, acute care, and rehabilitation. Her main teaching responsibilities include exercise physiology, therapeutic exercise and portions of cardiopulmonary and kinesiology. Research interests include physical activity and cardiovascular disease, energy expenditure of impaired populations and adolescent and adult obesity, including metabolic syndrome. She has recently published an article on "Increasing physical activity and reducing cardiovascular risk using methods of accumulating physical activity".

Dr. Glenn Irion, joined the faculty in May of 2002. His doctorate is in Physiology from the Medical School at Temple University in Philadelphia. He is a certified wound specialist (CWS) and also teaches cardiopulmonary and basic sciences. He has written two textbooks (physiology and wound management) and is in the process of co-editing a textbook on Women's Health PT with Dr. Mrs. Irion. He is engaged in research in wound management, cardiopulmonary PT issues, and the sociology of physical therapy practice. He is the editor of Acute Care Perspectives the publication of the Acute Care Section of the APTA. He is currently engaged in clinical practice at Infirmary Therapy Services with their wound care program.

Dr. Jean Irion joined the faculty part-time in August of 2003. She joined the faculty full-time in July of 2004 as the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education. She currently serves in the role of Assistant Director of Clinical Education and Assistant Department Chair. In addition, she serves the department as the Web-based DPT Program Coordinator, which is a transition DPT for licensed PTs. She completed her

initial undergraduate degree at West Virginia University in Physical Education, General Science Education, and Athletic Training; her Master's degree in Physical Education with an emphasis in Athletic Training and a BS degree in Physical Therapy, both from Temple University; and her doctoral degree in Higher Education at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She is also a Board Certified Clinical Specialist in Sports PT and a Certified Athletic Trainer. Her teaching responsibilities include professional issues, psychosocial issues, women's health, occupational health, therapeutic exercise related to spine dysfunction, patient education, and aquatic therapy. She also coordinates the department's Service Learning activities and pro bono services. Dr. Irion is the Chair of the Women's Health Specialty Council for the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties (ABPTS). In addition, she currently serves both the Aquatic PT and Women's Health Sections of the APTA in various capacities. Her research interests include prenatal and postpartum exercise and musculoskeletal dysfunction, gestational diabetes, high-risk pregnancy, aquatic therapy, and fitness and wellness. Her own company, Triple "C" Physical Therapy Services, provides consultation and continuing education as an independent contractor in the areas of women's health, occupational health and aquatic therapy and fitness classes for women in the middle years and beyond.

Professor John Jefferson completed his Physical Therapy training at the University of Toronto in 1980, his Master of Science in Biomechanics at the University of Waterloo in 1987 and his certificate in Orthopaedic Manipulative Therapy in 1990. He is currently a doctoral candidate in the DSc program at Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. He has taught entry-level and post-graduate courses in orthopaedics and manual therapy for 22 yrs. His current teaching responsibilities are primarily in orthopaedic assessment and manual therapy. His research interests are in orthopedic assessment and treatment procedures and in particular, the assessment and treatment of spinal conditions and referred and radicular pain.

Dr. Elisa Kennedy joined the faculty of the physical therapy department in Fall, 2006. She is a Board Certified Pediatric Clinical Specialist through the ABPTS and has received additional assessment certification in Neonatal Motor Assessment Scale (NOMAS) and training in the Clinical Neonatal Behavioral Assessment Scale (CLNBAS). Dr Kennedy holds a PhD in Early Childhood Special Education from the University of Georgia, MMSc in Physical Therapy with emphasis on Maternal and Child Health from Emory University, and a BS in Physical Therapy from Georgia State University. Prior to moving to Mobile, Dr Kennedy was the program specialist for the Neonatal Rehabilitation Team and Co-Director of the Interdisciplinary Collaborative Developmental Team of the Special Care Nurseries at Northside Hospital in Atlanta, GA, an establishing team member for the Follow-up Neonatal Developmental Clinic at Children's Hospital of Atlanta at Scottish Rite, and provider of early intervention services through a small private practice. Additionally, she served on Interagency Council Committees and provided expertise for special task forces within the State of Georgia as related to service delivery and personnel preparation for early interventionists working with families with infants and toddlers with special needs. She provides guest lectures, consultation, and continuing education courses in the areas of early intervention and developmental care in the NICU for a wide variety of audiences. She is interested in addressing practice needs of Pediatric PT's nationwide and serves as an active member on the Section on Pediatrics Practice Committee. Her areas of expertise in the DPT program are pediatrics and neurorehabilitation.

Dr. Jim Wall is from South London and joined the faculty in 1989, having spent the previous 12 years in Canada at the University of Guelph and Dalhousie University. His undergraduate degree is in chemistry and physiology from the University of London. A Masters degree in Biomechanics from the University of Surrey was followed by a PhD in Crystallography from Birkbeck College, University of London. While in Canada he obtained a MEd from the University of Toronto in Educational Theory. Dr. Wall continues his supportive role in the department with teaching research methods, human learning and patient education, biomechanics and the gait components of the curriculum. He is responsible for the organization of all student research projects, disseminating responsibilities to all faculty involved in student research. He continues to pursue research endeavors in his gait lab and also assists the faculty and local clinicians in analyzing patient gait patterns and conditions. He is currently writing computer programs to assess functional mobility and has developed a battery of balance tests with colleagues in Trondheim, Norway and Glasgow, Scotland.

Adjunct Instructor Diane Pitts PT RN teaches in medical screening, pathophysiology, orthotics and prosthetics, and soft tissue manipulation. She assists in other laboratory responsibilities for neurophysiology, musculoskeletal disorders, and kinesiology. She practices as an acute care and neurotherapist. Diane is a full-time PPDPT student.

Instructor Laura White joined the faculty in 2001 as an adjunct instructor and is now a full-time faculty member and the Director of Clinical Education (DCE). As an ABPTS board-certified geriatric specialist, Laura teaches much of the geriatric curriculum in the lifespan development course, the series of neuromuscular courses, and the psychosocial issues course. She also teaches the electrophysical agents component of the Therapeutic Interventions course in the first year of the curriculum. Laura is a trainer for the APTA Clinical Instructor Education and Credentialing program and offers this course annually at USA. She continues geriatric clinical practice on a prn basis and is currently completing the dissertation component of the DScPT degree program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Her research interests include motor control and learning in cognitively-impaired older adults, mental health screening, and clinical reasoning in physical therapy.