

Occupational Therapy Assistant Program



Occupational Therapy Assistant Program

Student Handbook

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MISSION STATEMENTS

McHenry County College Mission Statement

At McHenry County College, “Our focus is learning. Student success is our goal.”

OTA Program Mission Statement

The McHenry County College OTA Program will prepare individuals to function as entry-level certified occupational therapy assistants (OTA). Working in partnership with the occupational therapist, graduates will plan and implement goal-directed therapeutic occupations uniquely designed to help patients and clients achieve optimal performance in their daily life roles.

As means to implement the mission, the occupational therapy assistant program will provide:

- A comprehensive curriculum that emphasizes understanding of the development, achievement or restoration of adaptive occupational performance for the **unique needs and diversity of each individual**.
- Excellence in didactic knowledge and professional skills instruction with emphasis on learning in community contexts
- Foundational understanding of the basic tenets and **clinical reasoning** of occupational therapy and its application to those who seek to live productive lives.
- Opportunities to succeed and grow as **lifelong learners**, and as **professional and ethical** members of society.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHICAL STATEMENTS

Philosophical Perspective on Humankind

McHenry County College subscribes to the Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy as adopted by the Representative Assembly of the American Occupational Therapy Association in 1979. In implementing the occupational therapy assistant program, the faculty makes operational this historical philosophical point of view by delivering a curriculum that focuses on the occupational nature of humans and their ability to learn. The Person-Environment-Occupation Model provides a foundation for the curriculum and emphasizes the importance of understanding individuals and groups from both a micro- and macro-systems perspective. The system proposes that human occupation is determined and influenced by motivation, occupational performance, capacities to adapt to environmental and contextual influences with an examination of how these elements impact states of health, wellness and life satisfaction. Students will embark on holistic study of occupation as it emerges across and throughout the lifespan. They will be exposed to a variety of interactive influences that impact the adaptive abilities of individuals and that can produce states of health, wellness or disruption. Appreciation of these concepts will then ready the student to gain knowledge and skills in how occupations and purposeful activities are implemented for the provision of occupational therapy

services, both traditionally and in ways that reflect current, evidence-based practice. In this manner, program graduates will be prepared to **ethically practice** in a wide range of practice environments and use appropriate **clinical reasoning skills** to best support successful occupational performance based on the **unique qualities** for each consumer, irrespective of the experience of occupational disruption.

Philosophical Perspectives on Learning

Learning experiences are designed to be compatible with the framework of the curriculum, the future **professional and ethical** roles of the occupational therapy assistant practitioner and the mixture of learning needs presented by graduates' future consumers. The learning environment is designed to support and promote **clinical reasoning** to address the **specific and diverse needs** of each consumer. To achieve entry-level practitioner competence, each student engages in learning presented in multiple formats that are multi-sensory in nature. Only in a safe learning environment can each student engage in both the familiar and unfamiliar learning environment successfully. These progressive experiences prepare a practitioner to function in a range of service arenas, **practice ethically**, and maintain perspectives with regards to **uniqueness** and **diversity** factors, while using **clinical reasoning** to provide high quality service.

Students are presented with foundational content that begins to develop and establish professional meaning, and early on, participate concurrently in “doing” kinds of learning, both in the classroom and in planned Level 1 Fieldwork experiences. In this way, factual, conceptual and theoretical content becomes alive when examined from personal experience and clinical situations. As students engage in the foundational content, they begin to practice the components of the professional reasoning process that culminates in becoming a flexible but ethical practitioner. Awareness and overt acknowledgement of students' learning processes, by both faculty and peers, increases a sense of safety and nurture interest and motivation for further learning.

As the process evolves throughout the curriculum, concepts increasingly become more complex and autonomous **critical thinking and reasoning** continue with application and generalization of **professional knowledge, skills and beliefs** to solidify each student's readiness for Level 2 Fieldwork. The final semester course utilizing problem-based learning principles to support each student in recognizing the professional readiness students have developed throughout the courses of the program.

OTA CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Preparation for Practice

In fall of 2013, McHenry County College received accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE)[®]. The content, scope and sequence of course offerings are informed primarily by two key resources, (1) the Person-Environment-Occupation Model and (2) the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process, 4th ed. The first conceptualizes a dynamic view of human occupational performance as it occurs and evolves throughout the lifespan. This lifespan view consequently encompasses the evolution of student to occupational therapy assistant professional as well as the development and learning of humankind. The second document reflects the profession's current collective understanding of the scope of the profession of occupational therapy and the professional processes utilized to deliver all aspects of service within the profession. The application of the OTPF and PEO Model are foundational resources to this curriculum design and is intended to result in McHenry County College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program graduates who develop sound, **effective, ethical and professional reasoning** strategies, incorporate **cultural and diverse** backgrounds into multiple practice environments, possess competent entry-level practice skills, including collaboration with the occupational therapist, and know when and how to seek out continued **professional growth**.

Description

The curriculum design is to prepare students as generalists with a broad exposure to current and emerging practice settings. This includes preparing students to work with a variety of diagnoses within individuals, groups, and the population at large.

The content, scope and sequence of course offerings are informed primarily by two key resources, (1) *The Person-Environment-Occupation Model* and (2) the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process*, 4th ed. The first conceptualizes a dynamic and holistic view of the person and his or her ability to complete activities within the context of occupational performance as it occurs and evolves throughout the lifespan and the relationship of the person within his or her environment and to the occupation or meaning how the three concepts are related. This lifespan view consequently encompasses the evolution of the student to an occupational therapy assistant professional. The second document reflects the profession's current collective understanding and scope for the profession of occupational therapy with professional processes utilized to deliver all aspects of service within the profession.

The program's curriculum design is highly compatible with the philosophy of learning to ensure adequate written and verbal communication skills, students are required to complete Introduction to English (ENG151) and Introduction to Speech (SPE151). Another area to ensure beginning **professional behaviors** with current best practice, students completed Evidenced Based Practice for quality research applications (HCE111). The dynamic and interactional elements of the design become particularly powerful for the student when presented within the framework of the approaches to learning described in the program's philosophy of teaching and learning. Exposition

of the concepts of **professional and ethical behaviors, cultural awareness and beliefs** of others and themselves, along with **clinical reasoning and application** presented to the students in Foundations of Occupational Therapy (OTA 110) and Therapeutic Methods I (OTA 120). To reinforce the program's curriculum design, concepts and learning approaches; each student will engage in a variety of Level 1 Fieldwork experiences (OTA 120, OTA 160 and OTA 210) that exposes students to individuals, groups, and populations successful in their occupational performance (i.e. children in a daycare setting; older adult in fitness groups) as well as those whose occupational performance is challenged due to a variety of possible disruptions (i.e. individual or families needing to accommodate to cognitive challenges; promoting health and wellness).

The Person-Environment-Occupation model (P-E-O) provides the underlying premise for the program's course sequence and a template for designing course content. The course sequence begins with an introduction of the concept of "Person" from the model in its prerequisite course of Introduction of Psychology (PSY 151) which emphasizes awareness of self as a departure point for relating to other people, Medical Terminology (AOM 135) to understand the breakdown of various diagnoses, and two courses of human anatomy and physiology (BIO 263 and BIO 264). In the course sequence of the OTA program, classes that emphasize the "Person" include the courses of Occupations Across the Lifespan (OTA 130) and Dynamics of Human Movement (OTA 140), Conditions Disrupting Participation (OTA 150), and Psychosocial Rehab Theory & Methods (OTA 160) that are applied to the domains of work, self-care & play and that also builds an understanding of "Person". As a student, they develop the concept of "Person" and **professional** for themselves in Professional Analysis in Practice (OTA 230) through encouragement, the student understands and develops appropriate **professional behaviors** with colleagues and clients and considers **cultural awareness** through functional goals and activities.

The impact of client factors and the various contexts of the "Environment" on the "Person" in the curriculum design include course content on conditions that challenge and disrupt occupational participation of clients and populations in the second and third semester (OTA 150, OTA 170, OTA 210, and OTA 220). The impact of "Environment" on practitioners from a macro-level perspective includes content on the healthcare delivery system, funding, regulatory issues and professional roles of the occupational therapy assistant in year two (OTA 230, OTA 240). **Ethical and cultural considerations** addressed at this macro-level as well as the **clinical reasoning** required to work through potential conflicts.

Content related to "Occupation" across the lifespan begins in semester one (OTA 120 and 130) and expands in subsequent courses titled Therapeutic Methods II and III (OTA 170 and OTA 220), Psychosocial Rehab & Methods (OTA 160) and Physical Theory & Rehab Methods (OTA 210).

Level 2 Fieldwork (OTA 260 and OTA 265) provides two opportunities for, integrative learning experiences during which occupational therapy assistant students can apply the scope of **professional knowledge** and skills acquired during the didactic aspects of the program (OTA 250). Each Level 2 placement will offer opportunities to utilize both the P-E-O approach and the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework as a means to understand consumer needs, continue to **develop professional behaviors**, plan and deliver occupational therapy services under the supervision of an occupational therapist while working with a **diverse population**. Fieldwork practice contexts and environments may be organizational, institutional or community-based and will include individuals with a variety of challenges to adaptive occupational performance at any period of the lifespan continuum.

Current and emerging practice settings are addressed by a variety of courses. Emerging practice areas are specifically addressed within OTA 110, OTA 160, OTA 170, OTA 210 and OTA 220. All students are expected to have at least one Level 1 Fieldwork experience within an emerging practice setting during the third semester of the program (FW1C). These settings may include aquatic therapy, therapeutic riding and hippo therapy for children and veterans, and community based mental health services to name a few.

Each class has a faculty/student ratio of 1:16 in lectures and lab sections. To enhance the educational experience, specific course assignments or activities may include additional faculty to be present to ensure the safety and educational components of the activity.

OTA 250 is taught in a blended format to encourage students' integrative learning with faculty and peers to encourage generalizations from previous didactic coursework into the daily practice settings of Level 2 Fieldwork (OTA 260 and OTA 265).

OTA PROGRAM GOALS AND OUTCOMES

General Education Goals:

1. Create accessible, high-impact student-focused services, interventions, and facilities that increase student engagement, completion, and career readiness.
2. Develop and execute transparent strategies for generating and sustaining financial resources necessary to drive College innovations and operations.
3. Deliver agile, secure, cost-effective, and sustainable infrastructure and technology solutions to drive institutional innovation and empower a positive learning and work environment.
4. Attract, retain, engage, and value diverse and dynamic faculty, staff, and administrators who are committed to excellence in our ever-changing context.
5. Strengthen collaborations with the community and local industry to ensure that all College efforts are focused on improving the quality of life and economic development for those individuals who learn with us.
6. Inspire and challenge students in every learning experience through the careful professional expertise of faculty who engage and support students, and expect high levels of learning.
7. Articulate the College's key value propositions in order to strategically increase community engagement and support, improve enrollment, and prepare the next generation of learners.
8. Develop effective strategies in all our interactions with students and each other that welcome and value our diversity.

OTA Program Outcomes

Graduates of the program will:

- Demonstrate understanding of human growth and potential within the context of environment and culture.
- Use **clinical reasoning skills** and meet objectives of an occupational therapy intervention plan and recognize the need for adaptations, adjustments and restructuring of a plan with the guidance of the occupational therapist.
- Function as a **professional and ethical** member of a healthcare delivery team reflecting a range of models and systems.
- Demonstrate effective oral and written communications with supervisors, colleagues and consumers and their families.
- Act in an **ethically responsible** way with regard to legal obligations applicable in practice environments.
- **Respect all people and cultures** while providing services to clients in a variety of settings.
- **Demonstrate attitudes, values and behaviors congruent with the profession's standards and ethics.**
- Demonstrate strategies utilizing personal strengths as agents of therapeutic change.

To encourage student success in the OTA program, OTA students meet at least one time during a semester to discuss and review their fieldwork information and courses with a faculty member from the OTA program. This encourages the student to have a one-on-one time with faculty to discuss any concerns the student may express about his or her progress in the program. Students may arrange additional times with faculty member as needed to provide greater clarification and/or assistance throughout the program.

If students have exams and/or assignments that are completed as part of the grade and expectation of the course and/or class with a grade below 75%, the student will meet with the instructor to determine if the knowledge and concept was understood by the student. Students are encouraged to seek advice as needed above the expected one-time per semester with a faculty member. A Student Update form will be completed to document the semester review was completed.

CURRICULUM COURSE SEQUENCE

Prerequisite Courses	Credit hours
ENG 151 - Composition I	3
SPE 151 - Introduction to Speech	3
PSY 151 - Introduction to Psychology	3
BIO 263 - Human Anatomy & Physiology I	4
BIO 264 - Human Anatomy & Physiology II	4
Total Credit Hours	17
Semester One, Year One - Spring	
HCE 111 - Evidenced Based Healthcare*	1
AOM 135- Medical Terminology*	3
OTA 110 - Foundations of Occupational Therapy*	2
OTA 120 - Therapeutic Methods I	3
OTA 130 - Occupations Across the Lifespan	4
OTA 140 - Dynamics of Human Movement	3
Total Credit Hours	16
Semester Two, Year One - Fall	
OTA 150 - Conditions Disrupting Participation	3
OTA 160 - Psychosocial Rehab Theory & Methods	5
OTA 170 - Therapeutic Methods II	3
Total Credit Hours	11
Semester Three, Year Two - Spring	
OTA 210 - Physical Theory & Rehab Methods	5
OTA 220 - Therapeutic Methods III	4
OTA 230 - Professional Analysis in Practice	3
OTA 240 - Health Services Management	2
Total Credit Hours	14
Semester Four, Year Two - Fall	
OTA 250 - Professional Practice Seminar	2
OTA 260 - Level 2A Fieldwork	5
OTA 265 - Level 2B Fieldwork	5
Total Credit Hours	12
TOTAL PROGRAM CREDIT HOURS	70

*May be taken prior to admittance into the OTA program.

ABBREVIATED COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

OTA 110 – Foundations of Occupational Therapy – 2 Credits

Foundations of Occupational Therapy introduces the concepts of occupation, occupational performance, and occupational therapy as a health and wellness profession. Occupational therapy as a profession is explored by introducing methods used for intervening in disorders and conditions that disrupt occupational performance. The history of the profession and its current philosophy are examined as a means to understand the emergence of the occupational therapist and occupational therapy assistant roles and their professional collaboration. NOTE: CDM 110 is highly recommended.

OTA 120 – Therapeutic Methods I – 3 credits

Therapeutic Methods I presents a unique approach of occupational therapy to use occupations and activities as therapeutic interventions. Skills learned include analysis of activities and their application to client needs in order to enhance occupational performance. Students will demonstrate beginning documentation skills through experiential learning in actual practice settings. Level 1 Fieldwork hours are included in the course.

OTA 130 - Occupations Across the Lifespan – 4 credits

Occupations Across the Lifespan includes observation, analysis, and performance of human occupation in the domains of work, self-care, education, and play/leisure throughout the lifespan. The course content emphasizes interpersonal communication, activity analysis and an introduction to the use of professional language and terms. The course examines the intrinsic value in human occupations and builds the basic skills necessary for teaching activities. Emphasis is on creative and critical thinking and strategies to develop self as an agent of change in the therapeutic process.

OTA 140 – Dynamics of Human Movement – 3 credits

Dynamics of Human Movement studies of the organization of the brain, spinal cord, peripheral nerves, and joints of the trunk, and upper extremity and lower extremity of the human body. Students explore the interrelationship among the central nervous system, peripheral nervous system, and musculoskeletal system and analysis of functional movement required for work, self-care, and play.

OTA 150 – Conditions Disrupting Participation – 3 credits

Conditions Disrupting Participation introduces many of the clinical conditions that are encountered in occupational therapy practice, including an overview of various diagnoses including the etiology, incidence, signs and symptoms, management and prognosis of each condition. Students learn to evaluate the impact of the condition on an individual's ability to engage in areas of occupation. Research and information retrieval are introduced as skills needed for future coursework and professional practice.

OTA 160 – Psychosocial Rehabilitation Theory & Methods – 5 credits

Psychosocial Rehabilitation Theory & Methods presents the principles and practice of observing, assessing, documenting, teaching, adapting, and grading self-care, work, education, and play/leisure for individuals with psychological, cognitive and social challenges. Students explore contexts of

culture and spirituality in relation to human occupation. Level 1 Fieldwork hours are included in the course.

OTA 170 – Therapeutic Methods II - 3 credits

Therapeutic Methods II focuses on simulated assessment and intervention strategies with demonstration strategies for fieldwork. Students demonstrate service competency for necessary skills including principles of problem solving identification, treatment implementation, activity adaptation and the use of assistive technologies for individuals with difficulty in occupational performance.

OTA 210 – Physical Theory and Rehab Methods – 5 credits

Physical Theory and Rehab Methods explores principles and practice of observing, assessing, documenting, teaching, adapting, and grading self-care, work, and play/leisure for individuals with physical challenges. Techniques and equipment that maximize participation in meaningful occupations, improve independence, assure safety, and prevent deformity are emphasized. Students examine ethical, critical and clinical reasoning, considerations of culture and environment as an integral component of occupational therapy assistant practice. Level 1 Fieldwork hours are included in the course.

OTA 220 – Therapeutic Methods III – 4 credits

Therapeutic Methods III focuses on intervention for occupational performance challenges due to disrupted client factors associated with impaired motor and process skills such as cognitive-perceptual functioning, sensory processing, and neuromusculoskeletal functions. Students learn facility-based and community based interventions used by the OTA in the area of assessment, planning, implementation of treatment programs and service discontinuation, with emphasis on use of meaningful occupation and understanding of individual performance contexts and patterns.

OTA 230 - Professional Analysis in Practice – 3 credits

Professional Analysis in Practice is a seminar course utilizing case inquiry approaches in order to solidify understanding of professional reasoning, communication and self-reflection. Students work in small groups, using evidenced-based approaches to interpret, analyze and strategize varied intervention options.

OTA 240 - Health Services Management – 2 credits

Health Services Management explores basic management and support tasks relevant to the role of the occupational therapy assistant including ethical principles in the workplace, the roles and functions of regulatory agencies, funding and reimbursement systems, and health care delivery systems. The role of the occupational therapy assistant in program development is experientially explored.

OTA 250 Professional Practice Seminar– 2 credits

Professional Practice Seminar is the examination of professional issues, the role of agencies and associations that support and regulate occupational therapy practice, and advocacy roles of the occupational therapy assistant. Topics include preparation activities for Level 2 Fieldwork,

licensure and certification, employment acquisition, and development of a professional development plan. NOTE: This is a blended course and will require access to the internet.

OTA 260 – Fieldwork Level 2A – 5 credits

Fieldwork Level 2A provides a minimum of nine weeks of supervised experience practicing the skills of an entry-level occupational therapy assistant. Students are assigned to a setting where they receive practical experience integrating and applying knowledge and skills to a consumer population that offers a diversity of clinical experience from that offered in OTA 265. OTA 260 and OTA 265 must be completed within 18 months from the date of completion of the academic portion of the program.

OTA 265– Fieldwork Level 2B – 5 credits

Fieldwork Level 2B is a minimum of nine weeks of supervised experience practicing the skills of an entry-level occupational therapy assistant. Students are assigned to a setting where they receive practical experience integrating and applying knowledge and skills to a consumer population that offers a diversity of clinical experience from that offered in OTA 260. OTA 260 and OTA 265 must be completed within 18 months from the date of completion of the academic portion of the program.

Basic Functions for an Occupational Therapy Assistant

The following is a list of basic functions that are necessary for a student to be able to complete while in the program and completing the various levels of fieldwork to complete the Associates degree of Science in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. Students who have concerns with performing the following tasks in their education, need to contact the Program Director and notify Access and Disabilities Services to determine if reasonable modifications under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students need to remember the role of an OTA in the various settings and fields of practice to be an effective OTA after completion of the program.

A student must be able to:

1. Sit in class and complete various required movements up to 6 hours a day without risk of injury to self or others.
2. Move with adequate reflexive control and balance to ensure client safety that may or may not use equipment, while preventing injury to client and self.
3. Demonstrating the sensory motor skills, mobility, and general endurance necessary to effectively and safely complete all learning tasks, contributes to the occupational therapy intervention techniques in the academic and fieldwork environments.
4. Use visual, auditory, and tactile senses to observe clients to collect and interpret data.
5. Read and understand client charts, professional literature, notes from clients, family members, physicians, and other health professionals.
6. Respond to warning signals and calls for help or assistance.
7. Communicate effectively and clearly in English (using professional terminology) in both verbal and written formats with faculty, peers, clients, families, and other health professionals through appropriate documentation.
8. Acquire and demonstrate the educational information while applying the knowledge of occupational therapy principle and practice.
9. Behave in an ethical, legal and professional manner in the classroom and in the clinic setting at all times.
10. Modify one's own behavior and performance with appropriate response, to feedback from instructors, fieldwork educators, and peers to promote growth in learning.

PROGRAM ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Admissions Requirements

- Admission to McHenry County College.
- A grade of C or better is required for all general education and support courses: ENG 151, SPE 151, PSY 151, BIO 263 and BIO 264 (or equivalent). The biology courses must be completed within 5 years prior to admittance into the program.
- The cumulative GPA for general education and support courses of at least 2.75.
- Preference given to residents of McHenry County College District #528.
- Completion of written essay questions.
- Participation of group interview process.

Admissions Process

- Individuals must have a MCC student ID number to apply to the Occupational Therapy Assistant program. If an applicant has never attended MCC as a credit student, a MCC Admissions Form and a \$15 fee must be submitted online at www.mchenry.edu/apply or at the Registration Office, Room A258.
- If any general education or support courses were taken at another institution, official transcripts from every college or university you attended must be submitted to the Admissions Office with a request for it to be reviewed for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. It is highly recommended that official transcripts and evaluation requests be submitted one month prior to the application deadline.
- A two page typed response to the following essay questions:
 - What has been your exposure to occupational therapy assistants and/or occupational therapists?
 - What factors influenced your decision to become an occupational therapy assistant at MCC?
- Completion of the online application which can be found on MCC's website <https://www.mchenry.edu/ota/>.
- Participation in a group interview. Call 815-455-8710 for the Secretary for Health Professions to schedule your interview. Interview cycles begin August 1 of each year. Interviews start the same week as classes commence.

Criteria for Selection

The number of students accepted into the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is limited; therefore admission is competitive. The screening process design selects the most holistic and well-rounded students and takes into account GPA, completion of general education and support courses, residency of the student, experience or familiarity with occupational therapy, written and verbal communication skills.

Notification of Acceptance

Students are notified by mail of their acceptance into the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. They must complete and return an Intent to Enroll form within two weeks of receiving notification. Letters are sent to all applicants by October 15. If there are more qualified applicants than class

space available, applicants will be placed on a waiting list for that admissions year, and will be placed as space becomes available. Students that do not make it into the program will need to reapply for the following year. Applications will not be carried over from one year to the next.

Additional Requirements: Health, Legal, and CPR

Once accepted into the OTA program, students are required to provide proof of the following medical and legal clearance to participate in the OTA program at MCC:

- Current physical exam within one year of starting program.
- Proof of current immunizations.
 - MMR (Rubeola, Rubella, Mumps)
 - Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis)
 - Chicken Pox (Varicella)
 - Flu (Influenza)
 - Hepatitis B (may decline but will impact FW and job options)
- Two-step TB test or bloodwork or clear chest x-ray for TB treatment.
- Criminal background check.
- Clearance from the Office of the Inspector General.
- Current American Heart Association Basic Life Support with AED certification.
- Health insurance throughout the enrollment period of the program.

The medical forms and details about the background checks are distributed at the mandatory information session for new OTA students and those on the waiting list. The required documentation is submitted to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director in Room E212. Certain fieldwork sites require fingerprinting, and/or drug testing and may be at the expense of the student.

Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks

Some clinical education sites may require the student to complete a drug test and fingerprinting, or supply the results of a criminal background check. Students may be responsible for costs associated with these tests. Students are encouraged to ask about these tests and to obtain information on avoiding ingesting anything that could cause a false positive result on a drug test. Students who present with positive results without documentation of medical necessity will not be allowed to begin or continue in the program. The student may apply for readmission and/or re-entry after one year pending evidence of subsequent treatment, counseling and negative drug screen. Refusal by a student to submit to testing will result in that student's dismissal from the program. Instructions for completion of the drug screening process will be supplied by the McHenry County College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director.

McHenry County College does not rely on drug test results to deny access to academic programs for any student who is 21 or over. However, clinical, internship sites, or practicum locations may require a drug test to allow students to participate in a partner facility. A positive test result may eliminate a student from participating in a clinical, internship sites, or practicum location and may not allow a student to continue the course or program, and therefore, the student will not be able to complete the course or program.

Criminal background checks will be performed by the vendor hired by the college. Students will also be screened for clearance on the sex offender registry and child abuse clearance.

Impaired Students

If, in the judgment of the instructor, the student's ability to function safely in the clinical area is impaired, the student will be immediately removed. The instructor will document the incident and report it to the Director. A copy of the Report of Student Update will be incorporated into the student's file. Once documentation is completed, the student will be placed on an action plan by the OTA department to determine reasonable actions to be taken. This includes, but is not limited to, falling asleep in the classroom or clinical location.

Use of Prescribed Medications

The student must provide signed documentation from the prescribing practitioner to attend and participate in clinical activities without restriction. It is the student's responsibility to determine from a physician or nurse practitioner whether a medically prescribed drug may affect clinical performance. The student must report the use of such drugs or other substances that may impair clinical performance to the instructor. Failure to report the use of such drugs or substances or failure to provide proper evidence of medical authorization for use may result in the student's termination from the program.

COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES

Students follow the OTA Student Handbook and Fieldwork Manual for various aspects of the OTA program found online, via the OTA website at www.mchenry.edu. Additional MCC student academic policies are found at <http://www.mchenry.edu/policy/>. OTA Students also follow the MCC Student Code of Conduct found in the MCC McHenry County College catalog and online at <http://www.mchenry.edu/conduct/>.

Emergency notification system: <https://www.getrave.com/login/mchenry>

This notification system will notify student via email, phone call or text message when the college is closed. It is highly recommended for every student to sign up. This is the best way to have the most up-to-date information.

The student is expected to act in a responsible mature manner that reflects the qualities, reliability, and responsible interpersonal skills. These skills include, but are not limited to: using **critical thinking** skills in determining one's actions in the clinical and classroom setting; accepting responsibility for one's own actions, including preparing sufficiently for class and clinical; taking exams as scheduled and completing assignments on time, including patient/client care; responding appropriately and in a timely fashion to constructive criticism and feedback from faculty, clinical site, staff and peers; giving prior notification in writing or voicemail to faculty if unable to meeting commitments and following up with faculty regarding potential make up requirements; dealing with others (peers, faculty, staff, patients/clients and their families) in an honest, respectful, sensitive and non-judgmental manner that communicates respect for individual differences; respecting others' space and time through the demonstration of such actions as turning off cell phones, avoiding

disruptive sidebar conversations, and refraining from texting others in class and clinical settings. Profanity, derogatory comments, and emotional responses which inhibit learning will not be permitted. Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to: to willfully or intentionally do physical and/or mental harm to a client; to refuse to assume the assigned and necessary care of a client or failure to inform the instructor with immediacy when changes to clinical assignments are necessary; to discuss confidential information in inappropriate areas, such as elevators or the cafeteria; to discuss confidential information about a client with third parties who do not have a clear and legitimate need to know; or inattentiveness to classroom work.

Social media constitutes the use of, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, email and blogging. Use of social media is permitted, but only in a professional manner that adheres to the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics. All students must be aware that there is no such thing as “private social media” and must be cognizant of an unattended audience viewing any postings. Any of the following will be considered a violation of this policy: no names, identifiers or any information leading to the identification of any patient may be referenced; no photos may be taken with any electronic device at the clinical site; the use of social media during class, lab or clinical is prohibited; derogatory statements toward other students, faculty or employees of clinical sites are prohibited; professional boundaries with patients or previous patients in the online environment must be adhered to; confidential information regarding an exam, assignment, or quiz may not be shared; any other evidence of unprofessional behavior using media; clinical experiences are not to be discussed on ANY social network.

Additionally, honesty is expected of all OTA students in the classroom and clinical settings. Acts of lying, cheating, plagiarism, forgery, alteration and /or falsification of clinical documents, written work, or academic records will lead to failure of a course. In addition, the student’s actions may be subject to review by the MCC Student Conduct Board.

OTA PROGRAM SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Students are responsible for thoughtful care of all equipment utilized in lab instruction. Any student willfully damaging equipment will be financially responsible for repair or replacement. If equipment is accidentally damaged and a student causes or discovers it, and reports it to the instructor, the student will not be financially responsible. The OTA program is responsible for maintaining a safe environment for students in the lab and during completion of other educational activities. All equipment will be inspected at the beginning of a semester where it is used and again prior to use in classroom instruction. Students will receive instruction in proper use of equipment prior to utilizing it in a learning activity with peers.

Toxic and/or aerosol materials will be used only in open, well-ventilated spaces. Protective coverings will be used on all surfaces. The SDS book is kept in the lab room for chemical information on specific chemicals.

General Laboratory & Clinical Safety

Universal Precautions

During classroom lab activities, hands are washed between sessions of working with different class members or faculty members. Gloves are worn if a student or instructor has unhealed skin lesions on his or her hands. All used gloves must be disposed of in a container for regulated waste. In the event that any surface in the lab becomes contaminated with body fluids, appropriate cleanup procedures will be implemented, including any needed assistance from maintenance personnel.

Students will receive instruction and assessment in Universal Precautions at least annually. Documentation of acceptable knowledge and skill will be maintained in each student's fieldwork file or through the LMS system used by the College..

Infection Control

The program is responsible for maintaining a safe and healthy environment for students and faculty while in the classroom setting and during any relevant learning activities. General cleaning and maintenance procedures, performed on a regular basis, include the following:

- The classroom area will be cleaned and maintained in accordance with the policy developed by McHenry County College.
- Program equipment should be cleaned with an antiseptic solution available in the classroom; this includes all mat table, wheelchairs, canes, walkers, tub benches, therapy balls, etc.
- Linens used in class are to be washed at the completion of each session of use.
- Kitchen equipment is to be washed, dried and put away following classroom use.
- Surface cleaner and hand sanitizer is provided by the College for students to clean their specific area prior to and after using their learning space.

College Safety Policies

Upon entry into the program students will receive instruction of all published McHenry County College safety policies and procedures addressing emergency procedures, reporting of incidents, fire procedures, building evacuations, tornadoes and bomb threats. Copies of all these materials are maintained in the OTA classroom/lab for reference. Program faculty will assume responsibility for assisting or directing assistance for any person with a disability who needs to relocate due to a safety issue.

STUDENT SERVICES

MCC supports the development of the whole person. In keeping with this philosophy, the college offers a wide range of services and promotes responsible participation in student life activities. All of these services are available to all MCC students.

Access and Disabilities Services

ADS is the office on campus designated to provide reasonable accommodations for otherwise qualified students and community members with disabilities. We partner with instructors, staff,

student organizations, and community partners to make MCC a more accessible and inclusive environment for all students and community members.

Students with documented disabilities are eligible for Access and Disability Services. Some students in occupational programs, who are English Language Learners, or have other barriers to education may also qualify for accommodations. [Access and Disability](#)

Athletics

To learn more about the athletics program: <http://www.mchenry.edu/athletics/index.asp>

Bookstore

McHenry County College has a bookstore [MCC Bookstore](#) on campus where the students are able to purchase required textbooks and supplemental supplies for various courses in the curriculum. Students may buy or rent the textbooks depending on their preference for each course.

Career Services

The Career Services Office provides career development preparation and resources for students, alumni, and community residents. In addition, Career Services staff works closely with employers to coordinate internships, develop apprenticeships, and meet their part-time and full-time hiring needs. [MCC's Career Services](#)

Children's Learning Center

The Children's Learning Center (CLC) [Children's Learning Center](#) provides a positive learning environment for young children, in addition to being a lab site for MCC's Early Childhood Education Program. The CLC is state licensed.

Counseling Center

The Office of Crisis Intervention and Prevention Services is available, as a resource for you should you need assistance with life circumstances that may interfere with your learning and success at MCC. We work collaboratively with other offices at MCC, as well as community partners, to provide you with a wide range of services that meet your needs. Walk-ins and appointments are available. No appointment is needed for an emergency or crisis situation. [Crisis Intervention and Prevention Services](#)

Financial Aid

MCC is committed to helping remove economic barriers that may deprive students of an education. For this purpose, numerous financial aid options are available to assist students in their quest for higher education. <http://www.mchenry.edu/financialaid/>

Fitness Center

The Fitness Center is 2,800 square feet with a selection of weight training machines, treadmills, stair machines, cycles, and other cardiovascular equipment. The award-winning fitness program consists of friendly staff, comfortable atmosphere, and a comprehensive and sophisticated personalized delivery system. The Fitness Center provides both credit and non-credit use. The

hours of operation for the Fitness Center are published in both credit and Continuing Education course schedules, and are also available on the MCC website. [MCC's Fitness Center](#)

Library

The MCC Library <http://www.mchenry.edu/library/> provides the resources (books, journals, CDs, DVDs, electronic materials, research databases) and services (research assistance, instruction, interlibrary loan) which meet the information needs of the college community. We teach library patrons to find, evaluate, and use information effectively and support intellectual freedom, inquiry, and lifelong learning.

Multicultural Affairs

Multicultural Affairs <http://www.mchenry.edu/multicultural/> provides direct student support services and coordinates individual and group activities to promote integration into the college environment and academic success.

Sage Learning Center

The Sage Learning Center <http://www.mchenry.edu/sage/> is a general tutoring center for all registered students seeking assistance in a variety of academic subject areas. Comprehensive support is provided in math and in English/writing. The center also provides assistance wherever possible in many other courses. Tutoring is delivered by professional and peer tutors on both a drop-in and appointment basis and in both individual and group formats depending on the subject. Computer assisted instruction, supplemental instruction, study groups, and a resource library are also available.

COURSE TRANSFER

General Education and Support courses taken at another institution will be evaluated by the Office of Admissions to determine if they can be accepted by McHenry County College for credit. All OTA courses must be taken at MCC. Neither occupational therapy courses nor occupational therapy assistant courses may be transferred into the program from other developing or accredited programs.

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

Grades on Individual Assignments

Students receiving a grade below C on an exam or assignment will be required to meet with the faculty member to ensure knowledge has been obtained at a satisfactory level. Evaluation of this knowledge can be in the form of discussion, or additional assignments. The earned grade will not be changed. These advisement meetings will be documented as well as the method used to demonstrate knowledge or skill attainment and placed in the student file. Failure to complete the evaluation of this knowledge will lead to a learning contract. The following will be used a guideline for assigning grades

93 – 100	A
84 – 92.9	B

75 – 83.9	C
70 – 74.9	D
69.9 or below	F

Grades will not be rounded in any course.

The following is how the OTA program will maintain records and grades for the program:

- All records will remain in a locked cabinet in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director's office.
- Records in relation to transcripts and fieldwork will be retained by the college permanently.
- Fieldwork records will be maintained throughout the OTA program.
- Transcripts will be maintained by the college with the Registrar's office.
- Copies of exams and fieldwork assignments will be maintained through each accreditation cycle to enhance documentation of curriculum.
- All records will be disposed of according to MCC's guidelines of discarding confidential information.

Applications of students who were not accepted into the program will be disposed of according to MCC's guidelines for confidential information, a year after the application time frame.

Student Advisement

OTA students must meet with the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director or assigned faculty advisor at least one time each semester to review the student's progression through the program and ensure a plan is in place for successful completion. Regular advising meetings are planned to address class scheduling, program progression planning, preparation for fieldwork, and for graduation. Students are encouraged to seek out additional advising as necessary. The faculty advisor will document each meeting, including any issues, concerns or problems identified along with the results. Students are entitled to a copy of the documentation and any plan made and agreed to by the student and the faculty advisor. Documentation maintains in each student's locked file.

Grades/Dismissal

Once a student has been admitted into the OTA program, the student may continue to enroll in each successive semester of OTA courses until the student finishes the program, provided a grade of A, B, or C is earned in each course. Grades of D, F, I, or W are not considered passing. A student who does not earn a grade of C or better in a course will be dismissed from the program. The student may petition to repeat the course the next time the course is offered. A student must complete a written letter stating that they request to return and deliver it to the OTA Program Director.

Students must maintain an overall GPA of a 2.0 or better in order to progress in the program.

A student who has failed any two OTA program courses, or has failed the same OTA course or fieldwork twice, will be dismissed from the program without the ability to petition for re-entry. Students will only be given approval to withdrawal from an OTA course once. Students with egregious violations of academic integrity or professional behaviors may be dismissed from the program. The process for appeal for these types of offenses is found in the OTA Student

Handbook. Additional information on student conduct can be located at <http://www.mchenry.edu/conduct/>.

Students are required to maintain the appropriate levels of conduct on and off campus. They are to maintain appropriate levels ethics and professionalism throughout classroom and clinical experiences. Students may be dismissed from the program, but are not limited to:

1. Unprofessional or dishonest behavior
2. Actions which put a patient/client safety at risk
3. Infractions of clinical facility policy

Once a concern for unprofessional behavior is determined, the OTA director will gather and review the facts related to the concern and the OTA program faculty will discuss and determine the appropriate sanction including dismissal. If warranted, the student may be removed from the program and be presented with a letter stating that he or she is dismissed from the program. Any student which is dismissed from the program for unprofessional behaviors will not be permitted to attend any further OTA classes at MCC.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

For any issue a student encounters that he/she wishes to appeal, including but not limited to clinical failure, course grade, or behavioral issues, the student must attempt to resolve this issue first informally in a professional manner and then, if the issue is not resolved the student should initiate a formal complaint.

If the concern related to the program is specific to an individual faculty member, the student should address their concern with that individual.

If the student does not feel that their concern was heard or addressed, the student should discuss their concern with the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director. If the concern is related to the program as a whole, the student should start with the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director. The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director may meet with the student and the faculty member to address the concern. Note that concerns related to Level 1 and Level 2 Fieldwork should also be addressed with the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director at the time the concern occurs.

Student sends written appeal to the course faculty member within 5 business days of receiving the grade or written warning. A meeting of the student and faculty member to discuss the issue is encouraged but not required.

Faculty member sends written response to student within ten business days. If dissatisfied with the outcome of step 1, the student may choose to proceed to the next level.

If the student's appeal is denied, the student may appeal to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director within 5 days of receiving the faculty member's response by including the following information in writing to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director:

- His/her original appeal to the faculty member
- The faculty member's response
- Additional facts not available at the time of the initial appeal

After appropriate fact finding, the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director will notify the student of his/her decision in writing within ten business days.

If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of step 3, the student may appeal to the Dean of Allied Health within 5 days of receiving the Director's response by including the following information in writing to the Dean of Allied Health:

- His/her original appeal to the faculty member and the response
- His/her original appeal to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director and his/her response
- Additional facts not available at the time of the appeal to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director

After fact finding, the Executive Dean will notify the student of his/her decision via secure in writing within 10 business days. If the student chooses, they may appeal the process to the VP of Student Success following the procedures located in the college handbook.

<https://www.mchenry.edu/catalog/front.pdf>

Qualifications for Level 2 Fieldwork

Students must have completed all of the didactic course work with a grade of C or better, have a GPA of a 2.0 or better and must be approved by the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director to progress to Level 2 Fieldwork courses. Both Fieldwork Level 2 courses (OTA 260 and OTA 265) must be completed within 18 months of the completion of didactic course work.

Graduation Requirements

- Cumulative GPA of 2.00/4.0 or greater for all required courses
- Successful completion of Level 1A, 1B, 1C Fieldwork placements.
- Completion of Fieldwork Level 2 (OTA 260 and OTA 265) within 18 months of completion of the didactic portion of the program.
- 15 semester hours of program specific coursework taken at MCC
- Completion of intent to graduate form
- Completion of end-of-program assessment as directed by the department

LENGTH OF PROGRAM

Once the applicant is accepted into the OTA program, it is a two-year, four-semester program. If a student needs to repeat a semester or takes a leave of absence due to documented medical or personal reasons, the length of the program may be extended by up to 12 months; extending the program length to three years. The extension limitation is in the interest of knowledge currency.

Both Fieldwork Level 2 courses (OTA 260 and OTA 265) must be completed within 18 months of the completion of didactic course work. A leave of absence or repeating a semester may only be requested one time during the duration of the OTA program.

RE-ENTRY PETITION PROCESS

Students who have been dismissed from the program due to not passing an OTA course or a requested leave of absence based on a documented medical leave or personal reasons will be allowed to petition for re-entry into the program. The student may petition to repeat the course the next time the course is offered. Students who do not follow through on the petition and action plan will not be allowed to re-enter the program. The petition is a letter written by the student stating his or her request to re-enter the OTA program. The letter is to be given to the OTA Program Director.

Re-entry into the program sequence will be based upon space availability at the time of petitioning. Process for demonstrating continued compliance of material already covered will be tailored to the individual's needs, and may include, but not limited to the following: Repeating a course, tutoring, or skills lab before returning to course sequence. If a student requests re-entry due to illness or injury, the student's physician or nurse practitioner must release a student and give consent for him or her to continue in the curriculum.

If re-entry is granted, students will complete an action plan to document step-by-step requirements and results if action plan is not completed. The action plan is completed between the OTA Program Director and student working together to create a successful student centered plan.

Employment

Balancing employment with the demands of the OTA program is very difficult. The student is expected to be alert in both class and in clinical for academic success and client safety. Clinical and classroom expectations and schedules will not be altered to accommodate student employment.

Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and Ethics Standards (2020)

[AOTA-2020-Code-of-Ethics.pdf](#)

NATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

By the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy

Graduates of an accredited/ approved entry-level occupational therapy assistant program are eligible to sit for the certification exam. Information related to the process can be found at <https://www.nbcot.org/en/Students/get-certified>

Testing Process and Application

The certification examination is administered at Prometric Test Centers (PTCs) world-wide. Prometric is a comprehensive testing solutions include test design, development, administration, data management and analysis of test results. To ensure the integrity of its testing process, Prometric maintains stringent security standards in its test centers and across its network. Prometric provides exams for high caliber clients including NBCOT.

Candidates are provided four (4) hours to take the examination. Please plan on being at the test center for five (5) hours and fifteen (15) minutes to complete the tutorial, survey and other administrative requirements.

Eligible candidates must apply for authorization to take the examination by completing the NBCOT Certification Examination Application either on-line or using paper. Once approval is granted, the eligible candidate will receive a letter with information related to scheduling the examination time with PTC. The approval letter is active for 90 days. Eligible candidates must take the exam within 90 days of approval letter.

Eligibility Requirements

- Graduating with an accredited/approved entry-level occupational therapy assistant associate's degree
- Completing all fieldwork requirements
- Submitting an official final college or university transcript that indicates the date of graduation and degree title or NBCOT Academic Credential Verification Form (ACVF)
- Demonstrating a minimal proficiency in English language either by:
 - Passing the NBCOT OTR[®] or COTA[®] certification examination; or
 - Achieving a passing score on the TOEFL examination in English
- Agreeing to abide by the NBCOT Code of Conduct

- Attaining a passing score on the NBCOT OTR or COTA certification examination
- A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

Testing Accommodations

In adherence with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990, updated, 2010), NBCOT® provides reasonable and appropriate STA for exam applicants with disabilities who are otherwise eligible to take the OTR® or COTA® certification examination in the United States. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (e.g. caring for one's self; performing manual tasks; seeing; breathing; learning; and walking), a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.

Visit <https://www.nbcot.org/Students/Services#TestingAccommodations> for additional information related to accommodations for the exam.

STATE LICENSURE

Occupational therapy assistant students should be aware of state licensing laws at all times, especially while on fieldwork experiences. OTA students need to be aware that state licensing laws differ and regardless of the state in which the student resides or the school resides, the student is responsible for the state practice act in the state in which they are completing fieldwork.

When preparing to take the national certification exam, also prepare yourself for state licensure. While the application process may be different from state to state, all states require successful completion of educational requirements, both academic and fieldwork, and successful completion of the certification examination. Many states have limited ability to practice prior to successful completion of the certification examination and/or limited practice while awaiting the licensing application to be processed. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

The OTA program at MCC will provide more detailed information related to licensure and appropriate forms prior to the end of your last semester. The last day of OTA 250 is designed to complete the required paperwork for the state of Illinois and educational requirements for NBCOT upon official graduation from the accredited OTA program at MCC.