



Department of  
Academic Affairs

Occupational Therapy Assistant Student Handbook

*Official governing policies and procedures Revised September 2023; January 2025, October 2025*

For questions or comments concerning this handbook, please contact the Department of Academic Affairs. The information contained in this publication is program specific and supplements the information contained in the institutional catalog. The administration reserves the right to amend, supplement or rescind these policies at any time without prior notification.

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## **WELCOME**

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On behalf of the faculty and staff at Southeastern College, we are pleased to welcome you to the Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program. This handbook is a supplement to the College Catalog. It contains valuable information to assist you with your academic and professional goals as an Occupational Therapy Assistant student. The faculty will periodically review the policies and procedures, and reserves the right to make changes in policies, procedures, curriculum, and any other information contained in this handbook as necessary. Any changes and/or additions will be published as they occur and will supersede previous policies and/or procedures.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

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Southeastern College's policy of equal opportunity, consistent with federal policy, is that no person shall, on the grounds of race, creed, color, handicap, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, or belief, be excluded from any training, be denied the benefit of training, or be subjected to discrimination in any hiring practice or activity at the school.

To ensure continued success in achieving equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in all its programs and departments, Southeastern College hereby reaffirms that it is the responsibility of all staff, administration, and supervisory personnel to work actively to ensure equal opportunities within their respective departments, as well as to demonstrate a personal and professional commitment to equal opportunity for all persons. Management and supervisory personnel have a responsibility to provide leadership and support for equal opportunity programs.

## **ACCREDITATION**

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Southeastern College is institutionally accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC), 2101 Wilson Blvd, Suite 302, Arlington, VA 22201. Further information may be obtained by contacting the Commission at (703) 247-4212.

The Associate in Applied Science Degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant program at the Columbia and North Charleston Campuses are accredited Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA): 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200, North Bethesda, MD 20852-4929; (301) 652-6611 and the website is [www.acoteonline.org](http://www.acoteonline.org). *Graduates of the Associate in Applied Science Degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant program are eligible to sit for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) certification exam.*

## **A NOTE FROM THE FACULTY**

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The Southeastern College Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program faculty congratulate you on your acceptance into the program. We look forward to working with you in the acquisition of knowledge

in the occupational therapy profession and the development of clinical skills required for entry-level practice as an occupational therapy assistant.

Our curriculum is dynamic and reflective of current occupational therapy practice. Program faculty have achieved expertise in specific areas of clinical practice, enabling them to provide a wealth of knowledge in the academic arena. Program faculty strive to remain up to date in professional practice to ensure curriculum content is current and reflective of best-practice strategies.

As you begin your studies in the OTA program, we would like to wish you the best. The OTA faculty serves to guide you toward successful completion of the program and assist with your transition to professional practice.

Congratulations!

The OTA Program Faculty

## **OVERVIEW**

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### **Southeastern College Mission Statement**

The mission of Southeastern College is to provide quality career education and skill development to aspiring individuals wishing to pursue a career or advancement in their chosen field.

### **Southeastern College Goals and Objectives**

The following goals are integral to the mission of the College:

1. To continually change, improve, and ensure the effectiveness of the College's programs in preparing students for successful careers.
2. To appoint and maintain faculty which are qualified academically, possess current technical and professional knowledge and experience, and have the ability to convey this knowledge to students.
3. To appoint and maintain a staff who is caring, provides student support and meets the College's educational goals and objectives.
4. To improve written and verbal competencies of students as well as analytical and technical skills.
5. To provide facilities that support educational programs and enable students to develop profession-specific skills.
6. To attract qualified students of diverse backgrounds.
7. To provide a collegiate atmosphere of academic freedom that encourages open exchange of ideas.

### **Southeastern College Philosophy**

Southeastern College offers quality career education in an atmosphere of personalized attention. Southeastern College focuses on the specialized skills and knowledge needed for today's marketplace by providing courses that apply to skill performance and career management development.

Southeastern College selects industry experienced individuals as members of its faculty. This allows Southeastern College students to be educated by professionals who have practical knowledge in their particular field as well as the appropriate level of formal education.

## **OTA PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT**

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The mission of the OTA program is to prepare students for entry-level professional practice in an ever-changing healthcare environment. Emphasis is placed on the acquisition of a foundational knowledge base, building skills in clinical reasoning, professionalism, cultural competence, evidence-based research and practice, and competencies for specific clinical applications.

## **ALIGNMENT OF SOUTHEASTERN COLLEGE MISSION AND THE OTA PROGRAM MISSION**

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Integral to both mission statements is the provision of career-focused education and the development of skills required for successful entry into the field of occupational therapy. Southeastern College views quality education as the vehicle to develop the knowledge, skills, competencies, and professionalism needed for successful professional practice.

The OTA program mission further specifies inclusion of students from diverse backgrounds with the goal of actualizing positive contributions offered through diversity in the occupational therapy profession. This aligns Southeastern College's OTA program mission with that of the American Occupational Therapy Association's *Vision 2025*. The OTA program believes a diverse student body of competent, effective, career-minded individuals will positively impact the communities they serve.

### **OTA PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

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The OTA program adheres to a philosophy that views “humans as occupational beings, occupation as a health determinant, and participation in occupations as a fundamental human right” (AOTA, 2018). These fundamental concepts are further detailed in the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process-4* (AOTA, 2020), which is used as a tool to support and reinforce curriculum design, guide practice, and is integrated as a featured thread within the OTA program curriculum design.

The OTA program believes that an active, engaging, diverse, and inclusive curriculum design, in conjunction with an education grounded in the professions philosophical base, will produce entry-level practitioners proficient in client-centered, occupation-based, and theory-driven occupational therapy services (AOTA, 2018).

The program intends to promote the distinct value of occupational therapy through client advocacy and stakeholder education. A *student's first* philosophy promotes the development of career-oriented individuals from diverse backgrounds that maximize health, wellness, and quality of life for all people, populations, and communities that aligns with the profession of occupational therapy.

The program is committed to enhancing the occupational therapy profession at the local, state, and national levels. The program values the establishment of community partnerships that enhance the provision of student and educator training, responsiveness to practitioners needs in the field, and additional services identified to advance the profession.

### **Occupational Therapy Definition**

The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain & Process 4<sup>th</sup> Edition defines occupational therapy as:

The therapeutic use of everyday life occupations with persons, groups, or populations (i.e., the client) for the purpose of enhancing or enabling participation. Occupational therapy practitioners use their knowledge of the transactional relationship among the client, the client's engagement in valuable occupations, and the context to design occupation-based intervention plans. Occupational therapy services are provided for habilitation, rehabilitation, and promotion of health and wellness for clients with disability- and non-disability-related needs. These services include acquisition and preservation of occupational identity for clients who have or are at risk for developing an illness, injury, disease, disorder, condition, impairment, disability, activity limitation, or participation restriction (AOTA, 2020).

## **PROGRAM BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING**

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The OTA Program at Southeastern College believes student success is derived from active participation in the education process, integrating prior knowledge with academic coursework, skill development, professionalism, and critical thinking. Program curriculum is composed of didactic, laboratory, and clinical experiences that guide student education.

The OTA program believes the learning environment is the responsibility of the faculty and the students. A positive learning environment requires cooperation, commitment, and self-assessment from all invested individuals. The OTA program views students as individual, active participants with varying needs and attributes contributing to the educational process. The program strives to recognize individual student needs and offers collaborative learning environments that enhance and facilitate development of competent entry-level practitioners.

The occupational therapy profession, and this program, view learning as a continuous, life-long process. Ever-changing health care environments require occupational therapy practitioners to remain current in practice and utilize evidence-based interventions for maximizing client outcomes. Students must develop critical analysis skills for determining evidence credibility to safeguard the profession, clients, and communities served. Students must be prepared to practice as entry-level, generalist occupational therapy assistants with mastery achieved in Professional and Ethical Behaviors, Clinical Skills Competence, and Occupation-Centered Practice.

1. Learning is a continuous process, a part of professional growth and development, that is both necessary and highly encouraged.
2. Learning with respect to each student's individual personality, ability and learning preference is recognized and appreciated. Individual personalities, abilities, and learning preferences are recognized and valued. Learning is constructed by the individual's experience with both the materials presented and faculty guidance.
3. Learning involves instruction by qualified faculty who are respectful, understanding, fair, and considerate of the needs of each student.
4. Learning includes a classroom of students who are respectful to instructors and appreciate the individuality and varying teaching styles of each faculty member.
5. Learning involves active participation and respect for the emotional, social, cultural, physical, cognitive, and psychological aspects of everyone involved in the learning process.
6. Learning is accomplished through multi-dimensional strategies that are reflective of a dynamic education provided through an integrative classroom.

## DESIGN OF THE OTA PROGRAM AND INTERWOVEN THREADS

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The Program is designed to address the diverse needs of the student populations entering the OTA program and the high level of regulation for practice in the professional community. The purpose of curriculum design is to provide a framework that integrates all factors of the program analysis. The OTA program's curriculum design identifies three important aspects of student learning: development of professional behaviors, foundational academic knowledge, inclusive of occupational therapy's domain and process, and development of technical-clinical skills.

Students entering the OTA program are required to obtain a minimum standard score on the College's required entrance exam. Students also need to successfully pass general education courses with a minimum 2.75 GPA. Courses in general education include anatomy and physiology, college level math, humanities, and English. The program prerequisites provide foundational skills that support student's progression through the program and into professional practice.

The development of professional and ethical behaviors thread is woven throughout the curriculum. Professional behaviors are clearly outlined in the student manual, course syllabi, *AOTA Code of Ethics*, *AOTA Standards of Practice*, and are included as course competencies. Students who demonstrate unprofessional behaviors will participate in mandatory advisement sessions where action plans are developed to remediate unprofessional behaviors. Throughout the curriculum, and through the conclusion of Level II fieldwork experiences, professional behaviors will be closely monitored and refined.

The second thread in the curriculum design, occupation-centered practice, focuses on the academic foundation that clearly evidences occupational therapy's distinct focus on occupation. *The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain & Process-4* (OTPF) (AOTA, 2020), outlines the central concepts that underlie occupational therapy practice. The OT profession believes in the positive relationship between occupational engagement and desired client outcomes. The first semester is viewed as foundational, establishing basic concepts in occupational therapy, inclusive of the OTPF. The second semester explores specific performance skills and client factors with relevant treatment interventions. Finally, within the third semester, in-depth activity analysis and synthesis of the occupational therapy domain and processes. The fieldwork semester enables realistic practice of all occupational therapy concepts.

The third thread in the curriculum design is the development of clinical skills. Clinical skills encompass the clinical reasoning needed for the entire occupational therapy process: assessment, treatment, documentation, discharge, and referral. Clinical skills mastery will prepare graduates as competent generalists ready to fulfill the duties of an entry level OTA practitioner. OTA students will demonstrate competency necessary to treat clients across the age continuum in diverse settings.

OTA student must be able to address the varied populations whose physical, cognitive, perceptual, emotional, and sensory functioning interfere with occupational performance and participation. The

conclusion of the first semester, and into the second semester, students learn pathology and dysfunction and the introduction of basic OT treatment strategies. The third semester addresses specialized treatment techniques with increased emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration.

The OTA program structure provides increasingly complex material for student progression. This design follows Bloom's taxonomy and includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning. To be successful, the OTA student must be able to adapt to progressively complex levels of thinking.

The three curriculum threads that guide this program are evident throughout the course sequence. The first semester establishes OT foundational concepts, followed by analysis and application in the second semester, and then synthesis and evaluation in semester three. Bloom's model supports students being able to move through all levels of knowledge dependent on the depth and breadth of the learning experience. For this reason, the courses are structured to permit collaborative, interactive, experienced based learning, and skill competency.

The OTA curriculum consists of an integration of didactic, laboratory, and clinical experiences. The Program believes that both faculty and student are responsible for the learning environment, understanding the experience to be conducive to learning, everyone must act cooperatively, demonstrate commitment, and continually undergo self- assessment. The occupational therapy profession views learning as a lifelong endeavor. The OTA student will engage in methods of inquiry that aid development of independent learning skills. This ability will help safeguard the profession, clients, and the communities they serve. Faculty are required to demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning and the profession.

### **Student Outcomes, Goals, Objectives, and Curriculum Threads**

The OTA program seeks to align the philosophies of occupation and curriculum design with educational goals and student outcomes. The OTA program assessment measures are derived from these philosophies. The educational curriculum provides informal learning experiences, specific educational goals, and learning objectives that articulate concrete and realistic measures of student achievement. The following student outcomes support the programs mission and philosophy.

Learning outcomes are reflected in program assessment monitors (including the program's strategic plan) that seek to evidence and support the student's successful obtainment of these outcomes. See the program assessment section of this manual for expanded details. Curriculum threads were developed and integrated throughout the program to address the mission of graduating career-minded individual's that have met professional standards for competent practice. Threads include professional-ethical behaviors (encompassing research and documentation), foundations of practice, and clinical skills development.

**1.** Students will demonstrate professional behaviors reflective of an ethical and competent entry-level OTA practitioner working under the supervision of an occupational therapist.

#### **Thread #1: Professional and Ethical Behaviors**

- A. Effectively communicate through written documentation and verbal skills, demonstrating social and cultural awareness.
  - a. Writing and documentation assignments and competencies throughout courses.
  - b. Program Assessment: Student performance score as rated on the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE).
- B. Understand and use the *AOTA Code of Ethics* for reasoning through professional issues.
  - a. Ethical competency and course specific exam questions.
  - b. Program assessment: Results from the fieldwork educator survey item *ethical behavior*
- C. Demonstrate dependable work skills, attitudes, and behaviors by complying with all rules and regulations as stated in SEC catalog, OTA program, FW facilities, and specific course syllabi.
  - a. Professional behavior skills as indicated by lack of action plans or issuing of disciplinary actions.
  - b. Program assessment: Results from fieldwork educator survey item *professional competence*
- D. Effectively communicate appropriate aspects of patient care, employing evidence-based practice and research to the supervising occupational therapist in a timely manner, during courses and Fieldwork.
  - a. Writing and documentation case studies in each course
  - b. Program assessment: employer surveys, alumni surveys
  - c. Student performance score as rated on the FWPE.
- E. Contribute to the community at large by passing the NBCOT Certification Exam, securing employment in the profession, and participating in opportunities for life-long professional development.
  - a. NBCOT pass rates end of year reports
  - b. Membership to national and state associations
  - c. Rules and regulations of the South Carolina Labor, Licensing, and Regulatory Board

**2.** Students will demonstrate an academic foundation that clearly evidences occupational therapy's distinct focus on occupation-centered practice, providing interventions that promote engagement in occupations for support within social and cultural contexts.

**Thread # 2 Occupation-Centered Practice**

- A. Demonstrate competency in areas of occupation using occupation-based and client-centered treatment procedures in class and in fieldwork.
  - a. OTPF assignments throughout the curriculum (see competency checklist)
  - b. Program Assessment: Student performance score as rated on the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE).
- B. Demonstrate understanding of the OTPF as a tool to guide practice and to develop interventions that support participation in context.
  - a. OTPF assignments throughout the curriculum (see competency checklist)

- b. Program Assessment: Student performance score as rated on the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE).
- C. Analyze activities to understand their distinct contribution to treatment and clinically justify activity modifications to enhance client engagement.
  - a. OTPF assignments throughout the curriculum (see competency checklist)
  - b. Program Assessment: Student performance score as rated on the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE).

**3.** Students will demonstrate emerging clinical skills using evidence-based treatment techniques, methodologies, and rationales for implementation, including clinical reasoning for successful entry-level practice.

**Thread # 3: Clinical Skills Competencies**

- A. Effectively implement a comprehensive occupational therapy treatment plan in case-studies and in fieldwork, under the supervision of a licensed occupational therapist in a caring, safe, effective, ethical, and legal manner.
  - a. Treatment competencies throughout the curriculum (see competency skill checklist)
  - b. Program Assessment: Student performance score as rated on the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE).
- B. Practice treatment techniques safely and proficiently as determined by course competency and fieldwork setting.
  - a. Competencies throughout the curriculum (competency skill checklist).
  - b. Pre-post test results: program assessment every month
  - c. Program Assessment: Student performance score as rated on the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE).
  - d. Program assessment: Results from fieldwork educator survey section *treatment techniques*
- C. Articulate rationale for treatment methods along the continuum of preparatory, purposeful, and occupation-centered practice, addressing client needs across the lifespan through selected case studies, competencies, and fieldwork experiences.
  - a. Competencies throughout the curriculum (see competency checklist)
  - b. Program Assessment: Student performance score as rated on the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE).
  - c. Program Assessment: Results from fieldwork educator survey section *treatment techniques*

As students continue through the curriculum, they acquire increasingly complex levels of professional behaviors, practice competencies, and treatment techniques with an emphasis in occupational therapy theories, models of practice, and the philosophical base of the occupational therapy profession. The outcomes of learning are evidenced in program assessment efforts; culminating in the fieldwork experience and measured with the AOTA FWPE. Additional assessment measures implemented throughout the curriculum include curriculum competency pass rates and pre-post test results. Finally,

pass rates on the NBCOT Certification Exam and employer/alumni surveys will support accomplishment of the OTA program mission.

The program's strategic plan is comprised of the establishment of a program mission and philosophy of learning, development of student learning outcomes and curriculum goals, identification of program threads and objectives monitored through program assessment measures. When opportunities for improvement are identified, the OTA program faculty will develop a plan to ensure revision and implementation. Strategic planning analysis is further described under the program evaluation section of this manual.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF GRADUATES**

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The mission of the OTA program is to graduate competent and ethical occupational therapy assistants who function in a safe and effective manner under the supervision of an OT. These abilities are mastered upon successful completion of the program.

**The following expectations are from the 2018 Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) Standards and Interpretive Guide (effective July 31, 2020):**

The dynamic nature of contemporary health and human services delivery systems requires the occupational therapy assistant to possess basic skills as a direct care provider, educator, manager, leader, and advocate for the profession and the consumer. A graduate from an ACOTE-accredited associate-degree-level occupational therapy assistant program must:

- Have acquired an educational foundation in the liberal arts and sciences, including a focus on issues related to diversity.
- Be educated as a generalist with a broad exposure to the delivery models and systems used in settings where occupational therapy is currently practiced and where it is emerging as a service.
- Have achieved entry-level competence through a combination of didactic and fieldwork education.
- Define theory as it applies to practice.
- Be prepared to articulate and apply occupational therapy principles and intervention tools to achieve expected outcomes as related to occupation.
- Be prepared to articulate and apply therapeutic use of occupations with persons, groups, and populations for the purpose of facilitating performance and participation in activities, occupations, and roles and situations in home, school, workplace, community, and other settings, as informed by the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework.
- Be able to apply evidence-based occupational therapy interventions to address the physical, cognitive, functional cognitive, psychosocial, sensory, and other aspects of performance in a variety of contexts and environments to support engagement in everyday life activities that affect health, well-being, and quality of life, as informed by the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework.
- Be prepared to be a lifelong learner to keep current with evidence-based professional practice.
- Uphold the ethical standards, values, and attitudes of the occupational therapy profession.
- Understand the distinct roles and responsibilities of the occupational therapist and the occupational therapy assistant in the supervisory process for service delivery.

- Be prepared to effectively collaborate with occupational therapists in service delivery.
- Be prepared to effectively communicate and work inter-professionally with all who provide services and programs for persons, groups, and populations.
- Be prepared to advocate as a professional for access to occupational therapy services offered and for the recipients of those services.
- Demonstrate active involvement in professional development, leadership, and advocacy. (AOTA, 2018)

## **UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS AND DRESS CODE**

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Students must report to all classes and clinical sites in complete uniform, with clean shoes and proper grooming. Deviations in uniform dress code are not permitted. Students without uniforms are not permitted to attend class.

### **UNIFORMS**

Royal Blue Uniform  
 Clean white uniform shoes  
 White socks/stockings

### **OPTIONAL ITEMS**

White lab coat, cardigan sweater.  
 Tee shirt (white) worn under uniform top  
 Student dress down days; casual attire no torn or ripped jeans, zero tolerance for cleavage.

The only exception for wearing the student uniform will be for special events announced by student services. Students will be advised by OTA faculty regarding professional business attire when applicable. Students attending fieldwork placement will have to follow the facility specific dress code.

### **Jewelry**

Only display of necessary jewelry (watch) is considered appropriate in the healthcare environment. No dangling jewelry or visible body, facial, and/or tongue piercings of any type may be worn. Necklaces and chains must be worn inside the uniform top. *Excessive* jewelry is considered anything more than 2 rings and 2 bracelets per hand and/or 2 necklaces or 1 earring per ear). Excessive make-up and strong scents are also not permitted. Any of these infractions may result in disciplinary measures related to unprofessional behavior.

The following items are not permitted:

- Sandals, Clogs, Open toe shoes, Open back shoes including crocs.
- Political pins, Political emblems, Slogans
- Hair scarves, Hair ornaments, Hats (unless for religious reasons)

### **Grooming**

Students in the OTA program must adhere to acceptable standards of grooming and hygiene, as these impact professionalism in the workplace. Uniforms must be neat, clean, and ironed and shoes must be neat and clean.

Hair must be clean and maintained in a conservative hairstyle. All students with hair that falls below shoulder length must have it fastened up or fastened back off the shoulder. Faces must be clean; beards, mustaches and sideburns must be neatly trimmed.

Fingernails must be kept clean and trimmed to ½ inch in length. Bright fingernail polish and/or nail art is unacceptable. Artificial nails are not accepted in FW facilities that are JCAHO accredited. Tattoos *must* be covered or out-of-sight.

## **ATTENDANCE**

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The OTA program's modular curriculum design requires daily attendance to ensure student success. Each absence is the equivalent of one missed week of class time in traditional curriculum formats. When **three** absences occur in the same course, corrective plans of action and meetings with academic advisors are scheduled. Absences more than 20% of class hours, for any subject, may cause a student to be ineligible to take the final examination in that course.

1. Students, in the OTA program, are expected to attain 100% attendance and punctuality.
2. Student absences must be reported to the OTA faculty as far in advance as possible, but no later than the start of class. Notification may be made by phone or email. If notification is left via voicemail, then the student must follow-up by email within the first hour of the class being missed. Faculty may request written documentation to support unplanned absences.
3. All students are expected to be in assigned classrooms at or before scheduled start time. Students are expected to return from breaks at or before assigned times. All classes will remain in session until instructor dismissal.
4. Students who repeatedly arrive late, leave early and/or misuse break times will receive a written action plan that documents student advisement on punctuality and plan for remediation. Students are required to notify faculty of late arrivals.
5. Students receiving more than 2 written action plans during the same course, will be issued a letter of professional behavior warning.
6. If absenteeism issues persist following the letter of professional behavior warning, the student is placed on probation and referred to the Dean of Academic Affairs. A student on probation will not sit for the final exam and may be dismissed from the program.

Faculty will attempt to contact students who experience two consecutive absences. All communications between program faculty and students are maintained in the student's academic record. The student is responsible for all course content missed. Make-up work becomes the responsibility of the student. Students must contact program faculty to determine when coursework will be submitted.

## **ASSIGNMENTS/WRITTEN & ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

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All written assignments must follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style. Written assignments are assessed on content clarity, formatting, grammar, spelling, demonstration of student understanding, and inclusion of credible resources. Written assignments are to be submitted in a timely manner with faculty imposing grade deductions for tardy submissions.

Oral presentations include oral reports and simulated activities in lab. Oral presentations are assessed on content clarity, effective communication skills, grammar, diction, volume, fluidity, body language, and effective visual aids.

### **Competencies**

Competency requirements are established in each course to ensure student development of skills required for program completion and the successful transition to entry-level practice. Competencies are explained in detail using both written and verbal formats to ensure student understanding of expectations. Students must obtain a passing grade on all competencies.

If a student fails a competency, a second opportunity to repeat that competency is offered at the OTA program faculty's discretion. The final competency grade is the highest grade earned on the competency check. Additional attempts are offered, no more than two times within one week of the first attempt, to ensure successful attainment for progressing in the program. It is the student's responsibility to request and schedule any repeat competency testing. An action plan is developed, with remediation and tutoring offered; however, the first grade earned is maintained.

Competency results are maintained in the student's academic file with the faculty signed competency summary form. The competency summary form is updated in each course and reviewed during student advisement sessions each semester.

### **Examinations**

Written and computer-based exams assess a student's knowledge and understanding of course content. Practical exams assess student's knowledge in course content through practical application and professional behaviors. Practical exams also allow opportunities to assess student safety and competence in preparation for fieldwork experiences.

Students are expected to take exams at the time scheduled. Students must contact course faculty prior to the exam if circumstances arise that prevent attendance. Missed exams, whether written and/or practical are to be taken within two days of the original exam date. It is the responsibility of the student to re-schedule the exam at a time convenient for the instructor. When the exam is not taken within two days of the original exam date, or the student fails to attend the exam, a grade of *zero* will be issued.

### **Grades**

Course syllabi outline student requirements for successful course completion and grade calculations. Written work content and form are evaluated on inclusion of all assignment criteria, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and the use of APA Style.

To continue with satisfactory progress in the OTA program, students must earn a grade of C or higher in both general education and OTA curriculum courses. Additionally, in the general education component, the student must achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 (on a 4.0 scale) to progress into the OTA

program. Earning a grade of D or F in any course and/or not attaining a cumulative GPA of 2.75 (on a 4.0 scale) in the general education component will prevent admission into the program.

If a student fails a core course, the student must repeat the course the next time that it is offered. If a student fails a course twice, the student may be removed from the program.

Student performance in OTH 280 Fieldwork I is evaluated by the site supervisor using Southeastern College's OTA Level I Fieldwork form. Student performance in OTH 281 Fieldwork II is evaluated using the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Assistant (FWPE).

### Level II Fieldwork Requirements

The fieldwork educator evaluates each segment of the student's Level II fieldwork experience. A score of 91 points or above is required to pass the Level II fieldwork experience.

Special circumstances apply to the Level II Fieldwork courses. If a student fails her or his first placement for OTH 281 A and B and subsequently passes on the second attempt, the student is expected to pass OTH 281 C and D on the first attempt in order to complete the program and graduate. The failure of the first placement may count for both OTH 281 A and B and OTH 281 C and D.

### Tutoring

Students requiring additional assistance with course understanding are offered tutoring by OTA program faculty. It is the student's responsibility to seek out faculty members and establish times for tutoring sessions. Students are encouraged to request tutoring as soon as issues arise, preferably at the course onset. OTA program faculty may refer an OTA student to additional support services as needed, such as writing or media resources. Students should arrive prepared for tutoring by bringing questions, related materials and or assignments. Under no circumstances is the instructor expected to re-teach the entire class lecture. The expectation of tutoring is that the student has already studied and needs help to understand specific information.

### ADVISEMENT/ACTION PLAN

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#### Advisement

Academic advising begins with the instructional staff. Instructional staff is dedicated to meeting student needs while conducting student advisement in a professional and caring manner. Upon admission to the OTA program, students are assigned an academic advisor from among the OTA program faculty. Students are required to formally meet with academic advisors at a minimum of one time per semester. Recommended times are:

- During the first month of admission to the core program,
- Prior to Level I fieldwork, and
- Prior to Level II fieldwork.

Academic advisement serves to assist student progression through the program. Students are encouraged to seek advisement at any time issues or conflicts arise that interfere with successful program completion. OTA program faculty are available for academic assistance and advising during

hours posted and by appointment only. Southeastern College practices a *student's first*, open-door policy, with faculty eager to assist students as needed.

### **Action Plans**

Corrective plans of action are developed for each student that fails a graded assignment or exam. This allows students the opportunity to meet with course instructors to review issues that are impacting the learning environment. A plan of action establishes a strategy for grade remediation. All action plans are forwarded to the program director.

Corrective plans of action are also created to address issues impacting professional behaviors.

The following levels of infraction with resulting consequences include:

- **First infraction:** Verbal warning with written action plan.
- **Second infraction:** Written warning with placement on probation and a meeting with the Dean.
- **Third infraction:** Written action plan with course failure or alternative disposition.

### **Continuation in the Program/Course Repeat Policy**

Students will only be allowed one (1) retake of an Occupational Therapy Assistant Program core course and only a total of three (3) different Occupational Therapy Assistant Program core courses may be retaken. An exception to this policy will only be made upon approval of an Academic Course Repeat Petition which may only be granted once per student during the program.

### **Student Grievance Policy**

The program encourages the student to discuss the issue with the party(s) involved (i.e., Instructor, Program Director, etc.) within the first 48 hours following the alleged occurrence. If the student received an unsatisfactory resolution in directly dealing with the party(s) involved the student has a maximum two-week period to lodge a formal complaint with administration. (Administrative members include: Program Director, Dean of Academic Affairs and Campus President) A programmatic decision will be made by administrative members within 24 hours of the student's lodged complaint. The student will be notified of the decision by the following business day. If the student wishes to appeal the program's decision a formal process, external to the program is in place for resolving a student's grievance. The College's Grievance process is outlined in the College Catalog.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

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Each cohort of the OTA program will elect officers for the Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) to serve during the didactic portion of the program. Officers are elected in the second month of the program and serve through the 11<sup>th</sup> month. Subsequent cohort officers shadow the current officers prior to assuming elected roles. The elected SOTA President is responsible for relaying any program concerns to the PD. SOTA officers are responsible for planning service events, fundraisers, class parties, community events, etc. Student groups must have all activities approved by the program faculty prior to implementation.

The class will elect one student representative at the beginning of the OTA curriculum. The elected student will serve for one semester and will present any class concerns to the Program Director as a representative of the student group. Student groups may elect a representative each semester, as they select. The representative is encouraged to attend all OTA student association meetings if the campus has a SOTA club. These representatives will also maintain responsibility for class functions such as organizing activities to promote National Occupational Therapy month, class holiday parties, community events, etc. It is emphasized that at any time, any student may present individual concerns to the Program Director. Student groups must have all activities approved by the program faculty prior to the implementation.

### **HEALTH, MEDICAL EMERGENCIES AND HEALTH INSURANCE**

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Students in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program are required to have health insurance and record of immunization in place prior to the start of any clinical assignment. A copy of the insurance card must be kept on file in the OTA Program. Student Services has information regarding providers of health insurance for students who are interested.

Policy: Health Services for Emergencies

1. In the event a student at Southeastern College has a medical emergency, Southeastern College will immediately call 911 for emergency medical assistance.
2. The student is responsible for all costs incurred during medical treatment.

3. Should the student require emergency medical treatment while at a clinical education site, the student will use emergency facilities (i.e., emergency room at the clinical site).

If emergency services are not available at the clinical facility, the student should be transported for emergency services at another facility.

For other health problems and assistance, the Office of Student Services can offer referrals to community agencies with which the College maintains relationships. All such consultations with Student Services remain confidential.

### **CPR Training**

All students will receive CPR training as part of the program's curriculum in preparation for fieldwork. Students must pass this course or submit evidence of course completion, with an expiration date that will enable compliance with all fieldwork requirements.

### **Exposure to Blood borne Pathogens and Communicable Diseases**

The Program has developed a policy to limit the student's occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials since any exposure could result in the risk of transmission of these materials. As students entering the medical environment exposure to these and others may present a risk, even when not reflective of clinical duties or responsibilities.

Training: Basic information regarding blood borne pathogens and universal precautions will be provided to all students in the Program.

Exposure associated tasks for OTA students during the clinical rotations may include:

- Patient hygiene/elimination
- Environmental/equipment cleaning
- Waste/linens management

Standard precautions to prevent the acquisition of infection by the student:

- Hands must be washed between every direct patient contact
- Non-sterile gloves must be used if contact with blood, body fluid, secretion or excretion is anticipated.
- Gown and facial protection must be worn when doing procedures which may cause splatter & aerosolization of body fluids.
- Disposable needles & syringes should be placed in rigid puncture resistant containers. To prevent needle stick injuries, needles may not be recapped, bent or broken before disposal.

### **Incident reporting**

Should an exposure incident occur during a student's clinical rotation, the student should inform the Fieldwork Educator at the site and the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator within 24 hours of occurrence.

Appropriate actions and follow up will be initiated immediately by the Program Director upon receipt of a written incident report. Incident reports must also be completed for any accident or injury sustained by the student at the College or clinical site.

## **CLINICAL EDUCATION- FIELDWORK LEVEL I AND LEVEL II**

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The OTA program's curriculum is divided into a didactic portion that offers classroom and laboratory experiences, and two clinical portions that consist of Fieldwork Level I and Fieldwork Level II experiences. The clinical fieldwork experiences are independent of each other and have course objectives that are unique to each experience. No hours of Fieldwork Level I can be substituted for Fieldwork Level II. Fieldwork Level II hours are accrued per facility site and not cumulative between sites.

### **OTH 280 Fieldwork Level I**

The Level I experience allows for placement in various learning environments and/or through varied instructional methods that enhance the didactic learning experience. Level I supervision may be provided by licensed professionals, outside the field of OT, that demonstrate the ability to supervise and support the Level I experience. Fieldwork educators provide opportunities for role modeling professional behaviors and provide opportunities for collaboration in the practice of OT. Fieldwork educators provide student assessments that promote learning objective attainment during the Level I experience. Themes for weekly assignments address OT foundational content, professional behaviors and ethics, service management, screening and evaluation, treatment planning and intervention, and context of service delivery. The fieldwork educator provides students opportunities for practice, organized through learning objectives established in student assignments. Each assignment is accompanied by a rubric for criterion grading.

Hours are consistent with those of the classroom, with students attending assigned experiences from 9:00am–2:00pm. Some facilities may offer hours at alternative times, but this type of assignment would be at the AFWC and students' discretion. The Level I fieldwork experience occurs during the 8<sup>th</sup> month of the program, requires 100-hours of experience, and students earn 2 credits upon successful completion.

### **OTH 281A, 281B, 281C, 281D Fieldwork Level II**

Fieldwork Level II is held after the last semester of didactic coursework. Students are assigned to a minimum of two facilities across the 16-week period. The facilities offer occupational therapy services and have a qualified OT/OTA willing to serve as fieldwork educator. Level II fieldwork hours and schedules are aligned with those of the fieldwork educator. All students must understand that the Level II experience requires additional hours to complete a full-time work schedule. Each 4-week Level II fieldwork experience affords students the ability to accrue a minimum of 135 hours for a total of 3 credits. On the job training and academic transfer of learning will be realized during the Level II fieldwork experiences. Students will have up to 12-months to complete all Level II experiences. The clinical rotations for Level II experiences comply with ACOTE accreditation guidelines. The analysis involved in the assignment of students to Level II placement, is multi-faceted and includes:

1. Student's indication of a population of preference for the fieldwork experience.

2. Student specific learning needs or required skill acquisition, as evidenced by student performance through the didactic learning process, through demonstration of competency-based skills, and overall demonstration of professional skills, habits, and attitudes. Faculty input is required to complete a thorough assessment of student's skill levels.
3. Availability of facilities during a given rotation to best match facility demands with the student. Students will be assigned to facilities that provide opportunities for growth. To achieve the *just right challenge*, the facility and student relationship must be complimentary. This successful relationship will then support the development of entry-level practice skills.

### **Fieldwork Placements**

The fieldwork component of OTA education allows students to implement knowledge and skills acquired during the didactic experience for practical application. Clinical experiences provide student opportunities in professional role acquisition, progression toward clinical skill proficiency, and opportunities to practice documentation, communication, and service management skills.

The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) of the OTA program is responsible for securing affiliate contracts with outside agencies that will ensure successful student clinical experiences. Southeastern College and the affiliate agencies enter a legally binding contract that provides guarantees and safeguards to both parties. Students may not personally attempt to establish clinical affiliations. Any such attempts will disqualify the student from assignment at that site. Students interested in completing a fieldwork experience at a specific site that the program is not currently contracted with must discuss this interest with the AFWC. If possible, the AFWC will follow-up with the site to establish a contractual agreement.

Students will not be placed at clinical sites where they are currently or have previously been employed. Students are responsible for notifying the AFWC of previous or present employment that may be impacted by this policy. Placement in facilities where a prior student relationship exists is considered a *conflict of interest* for fieldwork experiences. A student's failure to disclose such relationships is considered a breach of professional conduct.

The AFWC collaborates with the PD and relevant faculty in assigning student fieldwork sites. Placement considerations are given to student interests, personal characteristics, and resources when possible. Upon admission to the OTA program, students are informed of the required fieldwork experiences and the potential travel requirements. Students are responsible for all costs, transportation, and living expenses incurred during the fieldwork component of education.

The AFWC is responsible for all fieldwork related issues and maintains a close working relationship with all clinical affiliation sites. Students represent Southeastern College and the OTA program when participating in fieldwork education and are expected to maintain professional conduct throughout the experience.

### **Schedule of Fieldwork Site**

Students must always adhere to supervisor schedules, unless otherwise approved. When holidays or hurricane days impact the attendance schedule, it is the student's responsibility to notify both the site and the OTA program. All schedule changes are assessed by the AFWC and the site supervisor.

### **MEDICAL RECORD CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

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Students will have access to confidential patient information during the education process at Southeastern College. Students are required to maintain confidentiality of all patient information in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). HIPAA is a federal law that established national standards to protect patient health information from disclosure without written consent. In addition to HIPAA, students must adhere to clinical site policies and procedures regarding medical records and patient information. If a student fails to comply with facility policies and federal law regarding patient confidentiality, immediate withdrawal from the OTA program will result.

### **Social Media and Clinical Experience Policy**

Students may not disclose information concerning patients, employees, clients and/or procedures witnessed during clinical experiences on any social media platform.

Southeastern College maintains a no fraternization policy regarding student interactions with faculty, staff, or fieldwork educators, including through social media platforms, while in the OTA program. If a student participates in inappropriate behaviors and/or through inappropriate posts on social media, the program will follow the Professional Behavior Policy for disciplinary action.

Future employers often review social media network sites when considering potential candidates for employment. Caution should be taken by all students when participating in social media, as the information posted may become public despite being removed or deleted.

### **Dismissal from Fieldwork Site**

In the event a fieldwork site requests student removal for noncompliance with site policies and procedures or behavioral issues, the student will receive a grade of *zero* for that fieldwork experience. The student is placed on academic behavior probation and, if deemed appropriate, will be reassigned to an alternate site. Should a second incident occur that results in site removal, the program will provide no further clinical reassignments, a failing grade will be issued, and the student will be dismissed from the program.

If the cause for student removal from a fieldwork site is initiated by the PD, AFWC or Dean of Academic Affairs due to unprofessional behavior, the student will be immediately dismissed from the program. If a student wishes to apply for re-entry to the OTA program, a thorough review of all disciplinary actions taken will occur. Readmission to the OTA program is dependent on program capacity, disciplinary review, and participation in the development of an action plan addressing professional behavior expectations.

## **PROVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES**

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All OTA program faculty are currently licensed to practice occupational therapy in the state of South Carolina and are certified by the National Board for Certification of Occupational Therapy. Institutional liability requirements allow faculty, while in the educational setting, to conduct treatment demonstrations only as part of the educational experience for OTA students. No *true* occupational therapy treatments are provided on campus by faculty, staff, students, or volunteers. Institutional liability requirements limit student practice of occupational therapy assessments and treatments to class and clinic activities under the supervision of program faculty and fieldwork educators.

## **RESTRICTION TO PRACTICE**

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State and national laws, through designated agencies, regulate health professions. Each agency sets specific requirements for granting licensure and/or certification to practice as a health care professional. Most agencies have restrictions on granting licensure or certification to an individual with a criminal record. Generally, agencies granting licensure or certification will not rule on individual cases until the individual is qualified by education and training to be licensed or certified.

For students with criminal backgrounds, felony or misdemeanors, fieldwork agencies may not allow students to practice or complete fieldwork in their facilities. When a felony conviction is evidenced, NBCOT will require an application for “early determination” at least six (6) months prior to taking the boards; the OTA program will highly encourage students to seek this process immediately, as a requirement for fieldwork. South Carolina state licensing board (as well as any other state licensing boards) will require a written affidavit with accompanying documentation when a misdemeanor or anything other than a traffic violation is evidenced. The OTA program will provide orientation to students prior to entering the program for these specific issues. Students will be formally advised of their educational options prior to beginning the OTA program.

**APPENDICES**

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**Student Personal Information Record**

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE : (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CONTACT:**

NAME; \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: (        ) \_\_\_\_\_

RELATIONSHIP : \_\_\_\_\_

### **Written Interview**

During orientation, new students document answers to the following questions. Responses are provided in complete sentences, demonstrating correct grammar, spelling, and a clear thought process. One-word answers are not accepted. Explain the following:

1. Why did you choose the field of occupational therapy over another healthcare profession?
2. How long you have been interested in pursuing an occupational therapy assistant degree in and why?
3. How have you prepared yourself for the intensity of the OTA program and the challenging study schedule (i.e., it is not unusual to have papers and exams due in the same week while continuing with daily assignments and readings)?
4. Program success involves faculty and students working together to create a beneficial learning experience. What do you believe are your responsibilities for success in the program AND what are your expectations of the program's faculty?
5. Please identify your three areas of strength and three areas of weakness. Pick one of your identified areas of weakness and provide an explanation for how this might be improved.



Please print physician's name clearly \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please attach Physician's business card or Stamp)

Student should maintain a copy of all medical/immunization records.

**Student Waiver of Hepatitis B Vaccine**

I understand that due to possible exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials during my fieldwork experiences, I may be at risk for acquiring the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) infection. I have hereby been advised of the possible risk of exposure to the Hepatitis B virus and have chosen NOT to obtain the Hepatitis B vaccination at this time. I understand that by declining this vaccination, I will be at risk for acquiring this disease during fieldwork experiences and Southeastern College will not be held liable for such exposure.

In the future, should I elect to be vaccinated for Hepatitis B, I will provide the University with written documentation, stating that I have completed the vaccine series.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student printed name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness printed name

### Potential Restriction on Obtaining Licensure or Certification to Practice

The practice of occupational therapy is regulated by both state and national agencies that establish specific requirements for granting licensure and certification. If a student's criminal background reflects a conviction, the student may not be able to participate in clinical experiences, apply for and receive a state license, or take the national certification examination.

Individuals who have been adjudicated and found guilty, or who have entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere, in a criminal investigation under the laws of any state in the United States, for any offense involving a **felony conviction**, whether or not sentence is imposed, **may be denied licensure or certification or may be deemed ineligible** to become a professional in this field. Generally, agencies granting licensure or certification will not rule on individual cases until the individual is qualified by education and training to be licensed or certified.

Most professional credentialing agencies have restrictions on granting licensure and/or certification to an individual with a criminal record. Therefore, these individuals must understand that they may not be eligible for the certification exam or state licensure. *Students with a FELONY CONVICTION in their criminal background report may not be eligible to attend fieldwork experiences as many agencies providing clinical affiliations require an impeccable criminal background check as a pre-requisite for accepting a student intern, due to the vulnerability of the patients being served.*

The National Board for Certification of Occupational Therapy

NBCOT  
800 South Fredrick Ave.  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877-4150  
(301) 990-7979  
[www.nbcot.org](http://www.nbcot.org)

South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Board of Occupational Therapy

Synergy Business Park  
Kingstree Building  
110 Centerview Dr.  
Columbia, South Carolina 29210  
Tel: (803) 896-4683  
[Contact.OT@llr.sc.gov](mailto:Contact.OT@llr.sc.gov)

I have read and understand the potential restrictions on obtaining licensure or certification to practice occupational therapy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Criminal Background Check**

An initial criminal background check will be required prior to enrollment in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. Once the student has been accepted into the program, should the student become involved in criminal activity in which the initial criminal background clearance status becomes compromised, the student may be withdrawn from the program.

The College reserves the right to deny an application to or continuance in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program based on the following criteria:

An applicant who has pled guilty, or has pled nolo contendere (no contest) to an offense which is classified as a misdemeanor or felony which is directly or indirectly related to patient care or public health; Crimes which may directly or indirectly relate to patient care or public health include, but are not limited to: murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, rape, sexual assault, violence or threat of violence, driving while intoxicated or impaired, controlled substance abuse; and fraudulently altering medical documentation, insurance claims, and medical prescriptions.

## Technical Standards for Occupational Therapy Assistant

### General Job Description

The occupational therapy assistant (OTA) works under the supervision of an occupational therapist(s) in the delivery of occupational therapy services across a variety of institutional and community-based settings for persons of all ages whose occupational performance is impacted by physical, developmental and/or emotional disability. The OTA assists the supervising OT in the evaluation, planning, and implementation of skilled interventions that are designed to facilitate a client's meaningful participation in life. Skilled OT interventions are those that establish, restore, modify, create, or remediate performance in daily life activities and promote health and wellness. Interventions include therapeutic use of self; therapeutic use of preparatory tasks and methods, functional activities, and occupation-based tasks; group activities, education and training, advocacy, and consultation.

### To the Student

As you reflect upon this general OTA job description, please carefully assess your personal physical, sensory, communication, cognitive/behavioral, and social/behavioral abilities about the following technical standards, as all OTA students must meet these defined technical standards. Your signature indicates an understanding of these requirements and is required for enrollment in the OTA program. Please contact the OTA program if you require additional information about the OTA Technical Standards and program requirements related to these standards. Students **MUST** meet technical standards or contact the Campus President for information about The Americans with Disabilities Act.

\*Performance Level: O = occasionally 50-74%; F = frequently 75-89%; C = constantly 90-100%

PHYSICAL STANDARDS	Performance Level*	Essential Function
LIFT: medium work strength to carry/maneuver heavy equipment	O	YES
fully/partially support weight of client during transfers to and from various surfaces (bed, chair, wheelchair, mat, toilet, tub, car, etc.) and when engaging client in functional ambulation	F	YES
BEND/STOOP: to adjust body parts, clothing and/or equipment when engaging clients in functional daily life activities in all areas of occupation (ADL, IADL, Work, Education, Play/Leisure, and Social Participation); for developmental activities	F	YES
KNEEL: to assist clients who may fall or faint; to perform C.P.R.; to assist clients with mat activities, developmental activities, and functional daily life activities in all areas of occupation (ADL, IADL, Work, Education, Play/Leisure, and Social Participation)	F	YES
CROUCH: to manage wheelchair parts and hospital beds, equipment adjustment, storing materials; to assist with lower body ADL training; to assist client in seated activities from bed, chair, wheelchair and/or mat	O	YES
CRAWL: for developmental interventions; engage in mat activities	O	YES

REACH: for retrieval of items in closets, cabinets, etc.; to adjust equipment; to guard clients	C	YES
HANDLE: sustained grasp and manipulate body parts during intervention; grasp and manipulate tools/equipment and modalities used in OT service delivery, including but not limited to pens/pencils, craft supplies, educational supplies, personal care items; positioning devices, functional mobility equipment, physical agent modalities, PB cuffs, protective gloves, gowns, and masks; computers and assistive technology; adaptive equipment; suspension equipment, etc.	C	YES
PHYSICAL STANDARDS	Performance Level*	Essential Function
DEXTERITY: use fine motor skills when performing standardized tests (dynamometer, goniometer, etc.); constructing orthotic devices/splints; writing/documenting; adjusting knobs, dials, and BP cuffs; donning and doffing protective gloves, masks, and gowns	C	YES
STAND: stand extended periods of time and for majority of working shift	C	YES
WALK: within facility environment (internal) for assigned shift	C	YES
within facility environment (external grounds – even and uneven surfaces) for functional mobility training	O	YES
PUSH/PULL: wheelchairs, hospital beds, scooters, Hoyer lifts, and other equipment including but not limited to IV poles, oxygen tanks, portable devices	C	YES
BALANCE: to assist clients with functional activities, including mobility (even and uneven surfaces)	C	YES
ENDURANCE: to manage full-time equivalent Level 2 fieldwork experiences and assigned work shifts	C	YES
SENSORY STANDARDS	Performance Level*	Essential Function
TACTILE: <i>Feel</i> to palpate muscle contractions and circulatory pulses; palpate bony landmarks and identify joint articulation; exert the necessary pressure to form splints; to discern skin texture and temperature to discriminate hot and cold modalities	F	YES
AUDITORY: <i>Hear</i> verbal directions and requests from health care team and clients/families; hear heart sounds through a stethoscope; hear breath sounds; hear client distress sounds and calls for assistance up to 10 feet away; hear environmental safety alarms; hear for effective communication between clients/families/co-workers	C	YES

VISUAL: <i>See</i> in detail to observe and detect client's movements, facial expressions and performance during individual and group intervention; <i>see</i> to observe and attend to the behaviors and needs of up to 10 individuals in a group session; <i>see</i> from a distance to observe client behaviors and performance; <i>see</i> in detail to detect changes in skin integrity, sweating, skin color, swelling, muscle atrophy, and gestures of non-verbal communication; <i>see</i> to detect safety hazards in the environment (water on floor, cords, and other small items) that could pose danger to a client's mobility/functional performance; <i>see</i> in detail to detect/assess BP (manometer dial) and ROM (goniometer)  <i>Read</i> numbers, letters, printed, typed and cursive writing in fine print; <i>read</i> paper and computerized files/records; <i>read</i> dials on modality equipment; <i>read</i> manuals and forms for administering and scoring standardized tests; <i>read</i> client records; <i>read</i> to collect information and screening data in English; <i>read</i> directions accompanying equipment; <i>read</i> to research subject matter	C	YES
COMMUNICATION STANDARDS	Performance Level*	Essential Function
SPEAK: In English language in clear and concise manner; to communicate in person and by phone with clients, families, significant others, the health care team, and community (report factual data orally; interview clients/family; explain role of occupational therapy and purpose of interventions)	C	YES
COMMUNICATION STANDARDS	Performance Level*	Essential Function
RESPOND: To clients with communication disorders (aphasia, hearing loss), or those who use ESL	F	YES
COMPREHEND: Oral and written language, including health care terminology to communicate with clients, families, significant others, health care providers, and community	C	YES
WRITE: In English, clearly and legibly for recording client specific data and general service delivery information in handwritten charts and computerized systems of documentation; In proper English using various electronic communication systems (email, etc.) to communicate with educational and professional community	C	YES
COGNITIVE/BEHAVIORAL and SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS	Performance Level*	Essential Function

Think critically for sound clinical judgment in the delivery of occupational therapy services (plan and implement appropriate client-centered interventions; problem solve to adjust in therapeutic interventions based on appropriate and inappropriate physiological and psychological responses by clients; determine need for consultation with occupational therapist and other health care providers/team members)	C	YES
Function safely, effectively, and calmly under demanding and stressful situations	C	YES
Remain alert to surroundings, potential emergencies; respond to client situations including falls, pain, changes in physical and/or mental status.	C	YES
Prioritize multiple tasks and maintain composure while managing multiple tasks simultaneously.	C	YES
Sustain concentration to attend to demanding and continuous tasks throughout work shift (direct client care and service management tasks)	C	YES
Exhibit social skills necessary to interact effectively with clients, families, supervisors, co-workers and community members of the same or different cultures with respect, compassion, politeness, tact, collaboration, teamwork, and discretion.	C	YES
Maintain personal hygiene consistent with close personal contact associated with client care.	C	YES
Display attitudes/actions consistent with the core values and ethical standards of the occupational therapy profession. These include values of truth, altruism, prudence, equality, dignity, justice, and freedom. These also include ethics of beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy, justice, veracity, and fidelity.	C	YES
Display attitudes/actions to effectively engage in the supervisory process including acceptance of feedback, modifying behavior in response to feedback, and providing feedback.	C	YES
Display attitudes/actions to approach workplace problems in a mature and responsible manner; seek and utilize effective strategies to resolve problems	C	YES
Abide by established policies and procedures of educational and health care institutions.	C	YES

I have read and agree with the OTA general job description and technical standards required for participation in the OTA program.

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## **Exposure to Blood borne Pathogens and Communicable Diseases**

The Program has developed a policy to limit the student's occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials since any exposure could result in the risk of transmission of these materials. As students entering the medical environment exposure to these and others may present a risk, even when not reflective of clinical duties or responsibilities.

Training: Basic information regarding blood borne pathogens and universal precautions will be provided to all students in the Program.

Exposure associated tasks for OTA students during the clinical rotations may include:

Patient hygiene/elimination

Environmental/equipment cleaning

Waste/linens management

Standard precautions to prevent the acquisition of infection by the student:

Hands must be washed between every direct patient contact

Non-sterile gloves must be used if contact with blood, body fluid, secretion or excretion is anticipated.

Gown and facial protection must be worn when doing procedures which may cause splatter & aerosolization of body fluids.

Disposable needles & syringes should be placed in rigid puncture resistant containers. To prevent needle stick injuries, needles may not be recapped, bent or broken before disposal.

**Acknowledgement that I have read and agree to follow the above:**

**Printed name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Witnessed by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Laboratory Safety Rules**

All students and faculty using the OTA laboratory are required to maintain the lab in accordance with medical/clinical standards of cleanliness and organization. A safe laboratory environment requires all users to be mindful of activities and/or items that compromise the safety of patients, staff, and visitors. Infection control procedures, universal precautions, storing of toxic chemicals and flammable substances, and knowledge of departmental and facility emergency and fire procedures are mandatory for all laboratory users. Daily inspection of the laboratory is conducted, and all users are expected to demonstrate sound clinical reasoning when working in the lab.

#### **The following safety rules are established for all OTA laboratory user's adherence:**

##### Managing the environment:

All floors are to be maintained clean and free of water spills. Housekeeping shall be notified immediately when spills occur.

All tabletops, counters, shelves, medical equipment, and appliances will be clean, in good condition, and fully functional for daily use. Maintenance is notified by course faculty immediately if repairs are required.

Students are responsible for returning materials, supplies and equipment in original working order.

OTA faculty inventory supplies and materials regularly and replenish as needed to maintain laboratory function.

##### Safety:

Students are responsible for inspecting tools, materials, and equipment prior to use for ensuring safety.

Students are responsible for seeking assistance from faculty when using any supplies, materials, or equipment they are unfamiliar with to ensure safety.

The use of any physical agent modality such as paraffin, hot packs, and cold packs, is to be completed under the direct supervision of licensed faculty only. Students should never use physical agent modalities while unsupervised.

Any food items used during treatment simulation must be stored appropriately. No food items should be stored in the ADL lab refrigerator. Food items that are used regularly must be dated and discarded upon expiration.

Students must read and sign an acknowledgement of the MSDS manual for safe chemical handling.

Any incident that compromises lab safety is immediately reported to the program director.

Students and faculty will adhere to infection control processes as determined by the CDC for disinfecting equipment and supplies and proper donning/doffing of PPE while in the lab.

There is zero tolerance for behavioral misconduct in the laboratory at any time.

#### **Acknowledgement that I read and agree to follow the above.**

**Printed name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Witness name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Acknowledgment of Clinical Experiences**

The acquisition of the clinical skills necessary for entry-level practice are incorporated into the curriculum's fieldwork component, which affords students the opportunity to implement the knowledge and skills acquired during the didactic experience of the program. Integrating didactic learning with the clinical experience strengthens the student's ability to clinically reason, form a professional identity, and encourages the use of evidence-based practice strategies in the field. The fieldwork experience offers exposure to a variety of practice settings and client populations that encompass the scope of occupational therapy practice.

Successful completion of the OTA program requires student engagement in a variety of clinical experiences. To provide these experiences, OTA program secures affiliation agreements with facilities willing to host students for supervised practical experiences. Due to the dynamic nature of healthcare, competing allied health schools, and clinic demands, these facilities may be offered in the local community, throughout the state, or in surrounding states. Students **are not** guaranteed local clinical experience placement and should be prepared to attend some or all practical experiences out of town. Students are responsible for all transportation and housing needed to effectively participate in fieldwork experiences.

Fieldwork experiences may vary in days and times, dependent on the site offering the experience. The hours will differ from those of the classroom schedule. The fieldwork component of the curriculum design includes both Level I and Level II experiences. Level 1 experiences are comprised of 100 hours of directed observation, participation in selected aspects of the OT process, and include performance evaluations by supervising site personnel. Level II experiences occur during the last semester of the core curriculum and include **a minimum of 16- weeks full-time** participation. The days and hours for clinical experiences are dependent on individual sites and the clinical supervisor's schedule.

- It is the responsibility of the student to attend and follow the schedule established with the Fieldwork Educator. Absences that exceed 20% of the course hours may result in a failing grade for the course. Students must call the facility/fieldwork educator and the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator a minimum of 2-hours prior to any absences or time off.
- Fieldwork experiences are evaluated by the supervising professional at each site. No part of Level I fieldwork can be substituted for Level II fieldwork. Level II experiences are comprised of two 8-week placements with a minimum of 270 hours attained in each for compliance with the externship credit hour ratio required by Southeastern College.
- Students must always adhere to supervisor schedules, unless otherwise approved. When holidays or hurricane days impact the attendance schedule, it is the student's responsibility to notify both the site and the OTA program. All schedule changes are assessed by the AFWC and the site supervisor.

Students are expected to complete **all** Level II fieldwork experiences within **12-months** of completing the program's curriculum courses. Failure to comply may negatively impact graduation, licensure, and certification.

### Clinical Education Requirements

The following are required of each OTA student (maintained in student file) prior to all fieldwork placements to ensure eligibility for participation:

- *A Statement of Good Health* provided by a physician that is no greater than one year old
- Current immunization/vaccination record that includes MMR, Varicella, TB test (chest x-ray < 2 years old), Hepatitis B (or signed waiver)
- Copy of health insurance card (valid through end of Level II placement)
- Copy of CPR/BLS certification card (valid through end of Level II placement)
- Evidence of HIPPA training
- Clear and satisfactory criminal background check results and 10-panel drug screen (as required by site).

Students are responsible for informing the program director of any changes to the above requirements prior to attending fieldwork. Failure to report changes will result in disciplinary action and inability to participate in fieldwork experiences.

Some clinical sites may have additional requirements the student will be responsible for completing prior to placement.

All requirements must be on file a minimum of one month prior to FW placement. Failure to meet requirements will result in student ineligibility to participate.

By signing this form, I understand the clinical education requirements and agree to comply with all requirements to participate in clinical fieldwork experiences. I further agree that the information required will be released to Southeastern College and its clinical affiliates as needed for fieldwork placements.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Eligibility for Credentialing**

Graduates of the OTA Program will be eligible to take the national certification examination administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT), upon completion of all academic requirements. The certification exam may be applied for and obtained from:

NBCOT  
800 South Frederick Avenue  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877-4150  
(301) 990-7979  
[www.nbcot.org](http://www.nbcot.org)

After completing the NBCOT certification examination successfully, the individual will be known as a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). If an individual fails the examination, it may be retaken, upon payments of fees and reapplication.

Most states, in addition to national certification, require licensure to practice. State licenses are usually based upon the results of the NBCOT examination. South Carolina requires such a license, which may be applied for and obtained from:

Board of Occupational Therapy Practice  
110 Centerview Drive  
Columbia, South Carolina 29210  
(803) 896 - 4300  
[llr.sc.gov](http://llr.sc.gov)

In South Carolina once a candidate passes the NBCOT exam they are eligible to apply for professional licensure. The results of the NBCOT examination are sent to the State licensing board by NBCOT. When the OT board meets, candidate's licensure status are reviewed, and a permanent license is issued. Graduates must apply for state licensure independently.

I have read and understand the above statement.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Student Medical Conditions/Pregnancy**

If a student develops a medical condition while enrolled in the program, it is the student's responsibility to notify the OTA program director (PD). To protect the health of the student, a written permission letter from the student's physician must be provided to the OTA PD, ensuring it is safe for that student to continue, and fully participate in all program activities. Successful completion of the program requires full participation in the entire curriculum.

The OTA program in no way discourages student pregnancy, as it recognizes this as a personal decision; however, pregnant students must acknowledge awareness that they will be exposed to potential hazards that could negatively impact the health and safety of both mother and unborn child. Such exposures may include participation in coursework that requires handling of caustic chemicals and participation in activities that cause physical stress and strain during treatment provision. Full participation in clinical education may also be impacted due to a sites inability to accept pregnant students for liability reasons. A pregnant student must notify the OTA PD as soon as possible to ensure accommodations are in place to allow for full participation as able.

To protect the health of the mother and fetus, a written permission letter from the student's physician must be obtained from the student and submitted to the PD, to ensure it is safe for the student to continue and fully participate in all curriculum activities. To successfully complete the program course work, a student must participate fully in all course activities.

Students who are unable to fully participate in the program will fail to meet the requirements for course completion and may withdraw from the program according to the guidelines outlined in the Southeastern College catalog. If appropriate, the student may return to the program following the re-entry process. Students that re-enter may encounter a waiting period, as OTA courses are offered one time per year for each cohort.

#### **Procedure:**

1. The student must provide written documentation from the treating physician that states the student is safe for full curriculum participation.
2. If the physician deems the student is not safe for full participation, the student, PD, and Dean of Academic Affairs will meet with the student to discuss any available academic options.
3. If the program can make reasonable accommodations without jeopardizing the knowledge and practice skills the student is required to demonstrate, then the program will do so.
4. The student may need to temporarily withdraw from the program until restoration of health is achieved. Students then provide a written medical clearance prior to undergoing the re-admission process.

I have read and understand the student medical condition/pregnancy policy and procedures.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Release for Use of Photograph/Video/Testimonial**

I hereby authorize Southeastern College, and its principals including its employees, assignees, or agents, to use, reproduce, or distribute my photograph or photographic likeness, videotaped image, and / or testimonial, individually or incorporated into any document(s) having as its (their) function any lawful purpose, in any manner they deem necessary, including but not limited to:

- Advertising / Promotions
- Illustration
- Guidance
- Description
- Press Coverage
- Recruitment
- Social Media

I understand that I am not entitled to compensation for use of said photographic/video graphic likeness nor input concerning its use. I am voluntarily speaking to the press and sharing my story. As a result, I release Southeastern College and its principals from all liability.

Name: (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed By: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Southeastern College OTA Faculty Directory**

Campus:

Program Director:

Academic Fieldwork Coordinator:

Faculty:

### **Southeastern College Face Covering Policy**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. **As safety at our institution is our primary concern, everyone on campus is required to wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when indoors. This includes classrooms, public restrooms, open office and common spaces, hallways, meeting rooms, libraries, and other indoor spaces. Additionally, face coverings are required outdoors when six-foot physical distancing cannot be maintained.** Signage will be placed around the campus to remind students, faculty and staff that face coverings are required.

It is important to note that the use of a face covering does not prevent the wearer from getting sick or eliminate the need to continue the primary mitigation efforts, to stop the spread of COVID-19, but may prevent the spread of the virus from the wearer to others. You may wear a homemade face covering if it is cleaned daily, or you may wear a purchased face covering. **Face coverings may not have obscene or offensive writing or artwork on them.**

According to CDC guidance, an effective face covering will meet the following criteria: fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, be secured with ties or ear loops, include multiple layers of fabric, allow for breathing without restriction, and be able to be laundered and machine-dried without damage or change to shape. Please review the World Health Organization (WHO) flyer for the correct way to wear a face covering. If you arrive to the campus and do not have a face covering, you may be sent home, or one may be provided to you.

Please note the following exceptions:

1. Individuals whose health or safety is put at risk by wearing a mask or cloth face-covering. If this applies to you, please contact the Campus President.
2. If you cannot wear a mask due to your religion under Title VII, or if you need a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) please contact the Campus President to obtain an accommodation.
3. Individuals alone in an office are permitted to remove their mask if they are seated at least six feet from the doorway. However, they must wear their mask or face covering at all other times.
4. Face coverings are not required in public spaces when eating or drinking, but individuals should seek to physically distance six feet and return the face covering, perform the necessary hand hygiene and replace the mask when they are done.

Individuals should also maintain other suggested health measures including maintaining six feet of physical distance even when wearing a mask, and frequently washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds. (8/25/20)

Name: (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Occupational Therapy Assistant Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form**

I have read the Southeastern College Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Student Handbook. In the handbook are the policies, rules, and regulations to follow for professional behaviors and grading procedures.

The orientation manual was discussed by the OTA staff, including the Program Director and/or faculty, and all my questions were explained and answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that all signed pages will become part of my student folder, which will also include all my exams and papers produced during my participation in the core curriculum. I understand I have a personal responsibility toward this course of study to ensure a successful outcome for graduation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have received a current Occupational Therapy Student Handbook and SEC Catalog.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the campus is programmatically accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE).

\_\_\_\_\_ I acknowledge that I have been fully advised that my program of study requires performing 100% of the required clinical and lab hours and that I am required to attend All clinical and laboratory hours when scheduled. I understand all the Clinical Attendance, Assignment, and Make Up Policies.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have been advised of the rigors of the Occupational Therapy Assisting Program, and I will seek tutoring if necessary and when advised.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to hold Southeastern College harmless for any and all consequences (including transmission of blood borne pathogens) of such participation which are neither the fault nor within the control of Southeastern College

\_\_\_\_\_ I further agree and understand that if an injury were to occur, I will immediately notify the instructor of said incident. I further hold Southeastern College harmless for any and all consequences resulting from said injury and for all costs incurred.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I am required to show proof of health insurance prior to the start of clinical rotation one and maintain current, active insurance throughout the program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the institution's pregnancy policy.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I will not receive remuneration for time spent at clinical sites during clinical rotation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I am required to sit for the NBCOT examination within sixty (60) days of completing the required coursework.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand the attendance and dress code policy of the program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the Health Exam, CPR, HIV/AIDs and OSHA Policy

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand the requirements for successful completion of courses, laboratory, and clinical components of the program.

Furthermore, my signature on this page acknowledges that I understand this information and agree that I will adhere to the policies and procedures specified in the OTA Student Handbook and Fieldwork Manual including, but not limited to:

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Technical Standards for the Occupational Therapy Assistant               | initial: _____ |
| Potential Restriction in Obtaining Licensure & Certification to Practice | initial: _____ |
| Acknowledgement of Clinical Experiences                                  | initial: _____ |
| Clinical Education Requirements  | initial: _____ |
| Criminal Background & Drug Screening                                     | initial: _____ |
| Eligibility of Credentialing   | initial: _____ |
| Medical Records Confidentiality Policy                                   | initial: _____ |
| Acknowledgement of Laboratory Safety                                     | initial: _____ |
| Acknowledgement of Bloodborne Pathogens and Communicable diseases        | initial: _____ |

If I do not follow these Program policies, I accept the consequences described in the Program manuals, course control documents, and/or the College Catalog.

I have read and understood the information contained in this document. Furthermore, I understand that failure to meet and comply with the requirements of this program may result in my termination from the program.

_____	_____	_____
Student Printed Name	Student Signature	Date