Welcome to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program!

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program within the School of Health Professions (SHP) at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey is committed to providing a high quality education in order to prepare each student to practice as an occupational therapy assistant under supervision and in collaboration with the occupational therapist.

You have been selected for this Associate of Science Degree Program because you have met the eligibility criteria including an expressed interest in serving others. The OTA Program will provide learning opportunities to help you acquire the knowledge, attitude and skills necessary to become a competent entry-level occupational therapy professional. The OTA Program faculty expects that you will take responsibility for the study, practice and professional development necessary to complete the program requirements and to become a productive and contributing member of the occupational therapy profession.

The OTA Program Manual herein is intended to supplement the School of Health Professions Student Handbook by providing information relative to the particular standards and processes of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. The SHP Student Handbook (2015) can be retrieved from:

Each student is required to abide by the policies outlined in the SHRP Student Handbook and the OTA Program Manual.

Please read the OTA Program Manual and the SHP Handbook, sign and upload the “OTA Program Manual Signature Page” (p. 87) to the Typhon system as explained at orientation.

This manual is for informational use only and does not constitute a contract between SHP and any student. The manual may be changed without prior notice to students. The OTA Program Manual includes references to policies and procedures of the Rutgers School of Health Professions that are current at the time of publication but may change during the academic year. Therefore, please always check current policies, procedures, rules and regulations at the Rutgers SHP website-. http://shp.rutgers.edu/.
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General Program Information

Location

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
School of Health Related Professions
Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Professions
1776 Raritan Road
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Room 307

Program Faculty

Catherine N. Colucci, MA, OTR
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Professor Colucci earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of New Hampshire and an Advanced Master’s Degree in Occupational Therapy with a specialization in developmental disabilities from New York University. She worked for many years in adult rehabilitation settings, and in a facility for children and young adults with developmental disabilities. Professor Colucci is certified in the Developmental, Individual Difference, and Relationship Based Model (DIR©) through the Interagency Council for Developmental and Learning Disorders (ICDL) and holds a post professional certificate in Infant Mental Health. She serves as the Acting Chairperson for New Jersey’s Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC), an advisory group for the State’s Early Intervention System for Infants, Toddlers and Families. Professor Colucci has spent much of her career providing occupational therapy fieldwork and academic education and serves as a trainer for the AOTA Fieldwork Educator Program.

Tiffany Benaroya, OTD, OTR
Academic Fieldwork Coordinator/Instructor
Contact Information to be provided Fall 2016

Dr. Benaroya earned a Bachelor's Degree in Exercise Science and Sports Studies from Rutgers University, and a Master's Degree and Doctorate Degree from the University of Southern California (USC). During her residency, she worked at USC University Hospital and her final portfolio focused on occupational therapy’s role with organ transplantation candidates. Dr.
Benaroya’s work experience has primarily been in the acute care setting serving patients across the lifespan, but she has also rotated through inpatient psychiatry and outpatient hand therapy during her career. She is certified in the use of Physical Agent Modalities, and served as the clinical fieldwork coordinator at her previous job for the past two years.

**Jennifer George, OTD, OTR**
Instructor
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Dr. Jennifer C George earned an Associate’s Degree in Occupational Therapy from Union County College, a Bachelor’s Degree in Occupational Therapy from Dominican College, and a Master’s Degree and Doctorate Degree in Occupational Therapy from Quinnipiac University. Dr. George has diverse work experience over many years working in acute adult/child inpatient psychiatry and outpatient child psychiatry, hospital-based adult/pediatric services, geriatric sub-acute rehabilitation, school-based therapy, and early intervention services. She is the founder of the C.H.A.N.C.E. program (Choose to Help Animals that Need Care Everyday) an occupational therapy based vocational program developed to broaden and diversify vocational training and placement for young adults transitioning into the workforce and brings her experience in the therapeutic use of animals to the OTA Program.

**Ernest Michael Bunuan, MOT, OTR**
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Michael Bunuan MOT, OTR has received his Master in Occupational Therapy from Worcester State College and Bachelor of Science in Health Studies from Boston University. Michael’s experience includes working in acute rehabilitation setting with clients recovering from brain injury, spinal cord injury, and limb amputation and in sub-acute rehabilitation setting with the older adults. Michael Bunuan earned a certificate as an AOTA fieldwork educator and has instructed numerous OT fieldwork level 1 and 2 students.
Tina Gawri, MOT, OTR
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Tina Gawri, MOT, OTR received her Master in Occupational Therapy and a Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences from the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. Tina joined the Rutgers OTA Program as an adjunct faculty member during 2015. She has experience in many areas of pediatric occupational therapy in various settings including schools and outpatient and inpatient acute rehabilitation. Tina is a Senior Occupational Therapist at Children’s Specialized Hospital where she coordinates fieldwork education for occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant students and trains/mentors interdisciplinary staff. Tina’s areas of clinical expertise include evaluation and treatment of children ages 0-21 recovering from, for example, brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, orthopedic surgeries, and burns. Tina is certified in the use of Physical Agent Modalities including neuromuscular electrical stimulation and specializes in splinting, casting and generally in providing OT assessment and intervention for children with neurologic impairments.

Craig Kaufmann, MS, OTR
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Craig Kaufmann MS, OTR earned his Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy from Kean University and a Bachelor's Degree in History from The College of New Jersey. Craig has work experience in community-based pediatric occupational therapy. He also has many years of experience in adult inpatient psychosocial occupational therapy, where he is currently employed as a Principal Occupational Therapist.

Fieldwork Educators
The OTA Program appreciates the many Fieldwork Educators who provide fieldwork education to the OTA students throughout the professional curriculum.

Genesis Rehab
The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program was developed in response to a healthcare workforce need in New Jersey. The OTA Program acknowledges and thanks Genesis Rehab, an industry leader in geriatric rehabilitation for their support in starting this program.
Accreditation

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200 Bethesda, MD 20814-3449. ACOTE’s telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA and its Web address is www.acoteonline.org

Partner Colleges:

The Associate of Science Degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant includes 32 prerequisite foundational credits (pre-professional phase of the OTA curriculum) provided through an OTA Partner College, and 42 professional credits earned at the Rutgers SHRP. Each Partner College has an established policy regarding transfer credits and residency requirements.

All 32 prerequisite foundational credits (pre-professional) must be completed before enrolling in the professional coursework except with special permission as described in the Program’s requirements for admission. Graduates of the program are awarded an Associate of Science (AS) Degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant jointly by Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and a Partner College.

The OTA Program is offered in collaboration with these Partner Colleges:

1. Camden County College
2. County College of Morris
3. Cumberland County College
4. Hudson County Community College
5. Mercer County Community College
6. Ocean Community College
7. Passaic County Community College
8. Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC is not enrolling new students)
9. Salem Community College
10. Sussex County Community College
11. Thomas Edison State College
12. Warren County Community College
Mission of the OTA Program

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program is committed to preparing Occupational Therapy Assistants as professionals who will contribute to the health and well-being of individuals, groups, and populations in New Jersey and beyond. The OTA program prepares students to serve people of all ages who experience illness, disease, disability, disadvantages, trauma and challenging life circumstances, to adapt by participating in meaningful occupations. The curriculum prepares the OTA to practice as a dynamic and inter-professional team member working under the supervision of an occupational therapist, within health care, educational, and other community systems.

The OTA program is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in undergraduate education in collaboration with other New Jersey colleges, industry partners, and fieldwork educators. The program faculty contributes to scholarship that supports healthcare education and occupational therapy practice. The program faculty and students envision participating in service to underserved persons as part of the educational program.

Program Description

The Associate of Science Degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant includes 32 general education credits (pre-professional phase of the OTA curriculum) provided through the OTA Partner College, and 42 professional credits earned at The Rutgers School of Health Professions.

The general education credits earned through the Partner College includes foundational content that is further developed and integrated within the professional curriculum, and applied during fieldwork education. The 42 professional credits are taken over the course of 4 semesters (full-time/16 months) or 6-7 semesters (part-time/24 months).

The content, scope, and sequence of the professional coursework supports the program’s mission with an emphasis on human occupation, adaptation, the process of becoming an OT professional, and evidence-based OT practice applications.

Fieldwork education is integrated into each segment (equivalent to a full-time semester) of coursework during the professional program. Part-time students complete all fieldwork
education requirements on a schedule that ensures prerequisite and co-requisite courses support and coincide with the experience. The final semester for full and part-time students is comprised of 16 weeks of full-time Level II fieldwork education.

Program Philosophy

The OTA program’s statement of fundamental beliefs about human beings reflects the philosophy of the occupational therapy profession published by AOTA. The curriculum’s key points of emphasis or threads are italicized in this description of the program’s philosophy. As occupational beings, people have an innate drive to explore the environment and to be occupied, as they care for personal needs, participate in meaningful relationships, and express themselves through their work and play. Health and wellness are enhanced by active engagement in home and community life. Improved well-being and quality of life are possible across the lifespan, and when living with a disability or disease, through participation in a balanced regime of rest, work, and play. Further, the health and well-being of populations and communities depends in part on their ability to participate in purposeful and meaningful occupation.

Occupations are “culturally and personally meaningful activities in which individuals partake on a daily basis or at various times throughout their lives” (Jackson, 1996, p.341). The course of life “is shaped by occupation and to a large extent people author their own development through what they do” (Kielhofner, 2008 p. 126). Occupational performance results from a dynamic transaction among person, occupation, and environment, and can change a person’s thoughts, feelings, capacities, and skills, as well as aspects of the environment. Occupational performance that is valued and repeated over time becomes skilled and organized into habits that can support meaningful participation in social and cultural life. Participation in meaningful occupation can restore health and improve quality of life, and is a need and right of every human being. The changing circumstances of life demand that human beings continually adapt in order to develop, maintain the self, and survive. Illness, disease, disability, and the normal aging process impact personal capacities and skills, and the way in which occupations are organized and unite. Occupational therapy assistants can facilitate adaptation to such disruptions by guiding engagement in meaningful occupation and helping people organize activity and routines, identifying strengths, and encouraging their pursuit of valued life roles. In OT Practice, the therapeutic relationship is built upon collaboration, respect, and an understanding of the holistic nature of the individual. The therapeutic relationship extends to significant others identified as central to the individual’s social and cultural context.
Becoming an Occupational Therapy Professional

Many factors impact the process of becoming an occupational therapy professional. Students enter the professional phase of the curriculum with varied educational and life experiences, and diverse cultural backgrounds. Some are establishing educational and professional lives, while others bring experiences from previous careers. Individuals entering the program may be returning to the role of a student while balancing this role with that of a part-time worker, and/or that of a family member, parent, or caregiver/supporter. Each student brings previous knowledge and a personal perspective that will influence his or her personal growth and development. These individual and collective experiences influence the dynamics of each class meeting. The dynamic relationships among and between faculty, students, and fieldwork educators, and the contexts for practice and learning, will support each student’s development as an occupational therapy professional.
Program Goals (2016-2017)

1. Establish identity as a premier Occupational Therapy Assistant Program and resource regarding OTA education and practice in the Metropolitan New Jersey/New York area.

2. Increase connection to program alumni including representation on the OTA Advisory Council, fieldwork education, lab activities and SHP initiatives on tutoring and mentoring.

3. Provide and advise OTA students about education options for bachelors and advanced degrees through Rutgers SHP.

4. Expand fieldwork education and employment opportunities for OTA graduates in the practice area of Mental Health.

5. Refine OTA curriculum with focus on integration between and among courses and fieldwork education, student assessment and simulation employing a scholarly approach to understanding and implementing these practices.

6. Expand and refine intra-professional academic and fieldwork education with the OT Program at Kean University and explore options with other OT education programs.

7. Participate in departmental and SHP inter-professional activities and committees that promote excellence in education, service learning, and scholarship.

8. Contribute to scholarship that supports OT/OTA education and OT practice through faculty scholarship and faculty-led student scholarship.
Curriculum Design

Constructivist and Contextual Learning Theories: Application to Curriculum Design

Constructivist learning theory posits an interaction between the learner and the environment whereby the learner forms a mental schema or model to assemble and reflect upon information. Each student enters the professional program with an existing mental framework comprised of knowledge garnered during previous coursework and a unique world view from life experiences.

Each student is taught and encouraged to organize information from pre-professional coursework within the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework III (2013). Understanding and using this new model requires reading, discussion, review, practice, and application.

Social interactions and relationships strengthen learning and retention according to constructivism. The Program’s Faculty establish a collaborative educational environment, while working with each individual student to launch goals and guide learning. Students work together in small groups to review curricular materials, problem solve OT interventions for case related situations, simulate practice situations, and to develop and practice techniques and skills. Through these interactions, students become more aware of their own values, beliefs, and tacit knowledge, and learn practical application.

Contextual Learning Theory (CLT) is an instructional process rooted in constructivism that focuses on the gradual development of experience and competence in a practice domain. Contexts in CLT include the student’s conceptual knowledge and interpretation of instructional goals (Schell & Schell, 2008, p. 260). OTA faculty use methodology in accordance with CLT including (Schell & Schell, 2008):

- Begin with student’s existing conceptual knowledge and past experiences
- Engage students with knowledge and skills directly related to professional practice with gradually increasing demands- begin global and move to specific
- Clarify instructional goals to ensure they are meaningful for each individual student
- Provide practical experiences in relevant simulated or real-life contexts to actively engage students
- Present domain knowledge and skills with modeling, guided practice, coaching, cueing, gradually requiring articulation and reflection
- Provide inter-disciplinary and inter-professional educational experiences
• Promote transfer of learning by guiding the student to recognize similarities across learning/practice settings including class, lab/simulation, home, community, or practice environments
• Provide meaningful methods for reflection including discussion, use of on-line forums, and portfolio development

The sequence of the professional coursework has been selected considering tenets of contextual learning theory. For example, the first semester course *OT Foundations for the OTA* acknowledges and builds on the student’s existing knowledge and past experiences while teaching the OT Practice Framework- III (2013). Each curricular course engages the student with content directly related to practice and gradually builds on practical skills and specific applications.

Through supervised fieldwork education and service learning in authentic settings, each student has multiple opportunities to solve practice related problems, and develop and refine professional and interpersonal skills. Level I fieldwork: Integration and Practice Applications serves to integrate content from the combined semester coursework and builds upon knowledge and skills honed during prior semester(s) academic and fieldwork education. Level II fieldwork education requires 16 weeks of direct application with different populations/practice settings, and these experiences serve to reinforce and evaluate the required competencies of an entry-level OTA.

**Curricular Threads**

*Occupational Beings across the Lifespan, Adaptation, Becoming an OT Professional and OT Practice* are conceptual threads that are woven through the curriculum with a particular emphasis in each course.

**Occupational Beings across the Lifespan**

Conceptual and practice models in Occupational Therapy and theory from the discipline of Occupational Science guide curricular content that will enable the OTA graduate to devise, implement, and adapt client-centered and occupation based interventions in collaboration with an OT.
Participation in meaningful occupation is discussed throughout the curriculum as an adaptive process essential for health and well-being. The student is exposed to variations in the form, function, and meaning of occupations across diverse cultures by observing, gathering information, and reflecting on what people do, how they do it, and the inherent meanings to the person or group. The social nature of occupational development becomes better understood when interacting with children and their parents/caregivers.

OTA students learn to perform selected assessments of skills and capacities with an emphasis on analysis of occupational performance in naturally occurring environments, while always considering the transaction among person, task, environment, and all relevant contexts.

**Adaptation**

The OTA curriculum builds upon each student’s previous knowledge related to health conditions, mental health, the aging process, and social circumstances. This knowledge is framed and anchored within the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework – II (2008) as the student understands how conditions impact occupation, participation, and health. Health conditions are introduced from a bio-psychosocial perspective using case studies that illustrate personal and contextual factors and demonstrate how human beings can *adapt* through participation in meaningful occupation.

*Adaptation* has been defined by scholars in occupational therapy as “the extent to which persons are able to develop, change in response to challenges, or otherwise achieve a state of well-being through what they do” (Fidler & Fidler, 1978; King, 1978; Nelson, 1988; Reilly, 1962 as sited in Kielhofner, 2008, p. 106). This curriculum teaches about the human process of adaptation and fosters the OTA student’s ability to teach, advise, guide, and coach others to choose, practice, and organize a balanced regime of occupations.

**Becoming an OT Professional**

The focus of *Becoming an OT Professional* is the student’s gradual acquisition of skills for client centered practice and professionalism. The Intentional Relationship Model (Taylor, 2008), The Model of Human Occupation (Kielhofner, 2008), and practice models in psychiatric rehabilitation, guide the curricular planning around developing professionalism and therapeutic use-of self. The curriculum provides opportunities to clarify personal values, to establish rapport, actively listen, use the teaching/learning process, and manage difficult emotions and behaviors. Coursework in communication skills and group dynamics is delivered in
collaboration within the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program. This opportunity exposes the OTA student to others pursuing education as a health professional, fosters teamwork and interdisciplinary collaboration, and provides an opportunity to learn from the expertise of other faculty and professionals.

The curriculum continually exposes the student to knowledge, techniques, and skills, and provides opportunities to participate in the OT/OTA supervisory and collaborative relationship. The professional seminars support and provide opportunities for reflection on supervision, productivity and management, and portfolio development. These seminars expose the student to the critical process of life-long learning that supports ongoing professional development.

**Occupational Therapy Practice**

During the first semester the student learns about the history and foundations for *OT practice* including the ethics, values, and core beliefs of the profession. The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework- III (2013) is introduced at this time, and is used throughout the curriculum and applied across practice settings. The student learns to discern the social and political context for OT practice in the United States and how various regulations impact practice in medical, social, and educational settings.

Training and practice in techniques and skills required across a variety of settings ensures safe practice and compliance with health precautions and contraindications when working with certain populations. The student gradually assimilates the ability to gather and record client information, and to develop intervention plans in collaboration with the person served, and the occupational therapist, as per the requirements of each practice setting. Each student participates in fieldwork education throughout the curriculum linking academic studies to the realities and demands of practice.

Each student is required to join the national and state occupational therapy associations as part of the process of developing into an occupational therapy professional. The OTA program uses resources from these organizations throughout the curriculum. The annual student membership Fee for American Occupational Therapy Association is $75.00 (www.aota.org). The annual student membership fee for The New Jersey Occupational Therapy Association Student Membership Fee is $25.00 (www.njota.org).

Each student is required to attend the Fall NJOTA conference. There is a reduced attendance rate for student members.
Each student is encouraged when feasible to attend the AOTA annual conference and may miss one day of class to attend.

References


A professional journey begins upon entering the OTA Program at the Rutgers School of Health Professions. Each student brings a unique perspective garnered from life experience, previous employment and education, to the pursuit of becoming an Occupational Therapy Assistant.

The small buildings at the base of this schematic represent the OTA Program’s Partner Colleges. These institutions provide a valuable foundation of knowledge for each student.

The structure’s central pillars represent the four curricular threads; *occupational beings across the lifespan, adaptation, becoming and OT professional*, and *OT practice*. These threads frame the course content and bring to life the philosophy of the program and OT profession.

Level I fieldwork education is illustrated as binding together the curricular threads during each segment of coursework. Each of the three segments of coursework form a stable platform upon which subsequent academic and fieldwork education are built.

The curriculum culminates with 16 weeks of Level II fieldwork education.

Having completed the first part of an ongoing professional journey and committed to life-long learning, the OTA Program graduate is depicted looking out from a window at the top of the structure while contemplating a new and ever evolving perspective on occupational therapy, healthcare and life.
Professional Curriculum

The 42-credit professional curriculum is designed for full-time or part-time study. Courses are grouped into four curricular segments that are each equivalent to one full-time semester. In this way, both full and part-times study options ensure that foundational courses precede more advanced coursework, that Level I fieldwork integrates essential content, and that knowledge and skills are progressively developed and advanced. The full-time track includes four semesters/segments beginning in the fall.

The part-time track differs slightly from that of the full-time and includes seven semesters beginning in the spring. The entire first segment of classes and two second segment classes are appropriately sequenced over the first three part-time semesters. Level I Fieldwork - A is completed during the third semester following completion of three and concurrent with one first segment course. The part-time track joins with the full-time track during the final two segments/semesters.

The full-time and the part-time tracks for the professional curriculum are depicted on the tables that follow. Each table is illustrated with the first semester on the bottom of the chart as the foundation, and with successive semesters constructed on top of each layer. The top of the page/top layer depicts the final semester that focuses on Level II Fieldwork.

The colors in each chart correspond to the four curricular segments as follows:

- Segment One- Blue
- Segment Two- Pink
- Segment Three- Purple
- Segment Four – Orange

The four curricular threads; Occupational Beings Across the Lifespan, Adaptation, Becoming an OT Professional, and OT Practice that guide the course content, scope, sequence of delivery, and student evaluation strategies, are labeled at the bottom of the full-time chart, and appear next to each course on the part-time chart.
### Professional Curriculum - Full Time Sequence (read from bottom up)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 4</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>12 credits</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Threads</td>
<td></td>
<td>16 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTA Practice - Level</td>
<td>OCTH 2029- 5c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTA Practice - Level</td>
<td>OCTH 2019 – 5c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Fieldwork</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Fieldwork</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children and Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults/Older Adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Seminar II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTH 2072</td>
<td>2c</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 3</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Level I Fieldwork C</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integration &amp; Practice</td>
<td></td>
<td>Applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTH 1039 – 1c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles and Practices III: Children &amp; Youth</td>
<td>2c</td>
<td>OCTH 1053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTH 1029 – 1c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles and Practices II: Adult/Older Adult</td>
<td>3c</td>
<td>OCTH 1052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTH 1029 – 1c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Performance &amp; Participation: Therapeutic Applications</td>
<td>3c</td>
<td>OCTH 1040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles &amp; Practices I: Wellness &amp; Mental Health</td>
<td>2c</td>
<td>OCTH 1051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Dynamics</td>
<td>3c</td>
<td>PRST 1103</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 2</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Level I Fieldwork B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integration &amp; Practice</td>
<td></td>
<td>Applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTH 1019- 1c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy Foundations for the OTA</td>
<td>3c</td>
<td>OCTH 1010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Performance &amp; Participation: Skills &amp; Client Factors</td>
<td>3c</td>
<td>OCTH 1020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions that Impact Occupation, Participation, &amp; Health I-Adult/Older Adult</td>
<td>2c</td>
<td>OCTH 1031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Techniques</td>
<td>3c</td>
<td>PRST 1102</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Level I Fieldwork A</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Occupational Therapy Foundations for the OTA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Performance &amp; Participation: Skills &amp; Client Factors</td>
<td>3c</td>
<td>OCTH 1020</td>
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<td>Conditions that Impact Occupation, Participation, &amp; Health I-Adult/Older Adult</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Techniques</td>
<td>3c</td>
<td>PRST 1102</td>
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</table>

| Primary Thread | OT Practice | Occupational Beings Across the Lifespan | Adaptation | Becoming an OT Professional |
### Professional Curriculum - Part-Time Sequence (read from bottom up)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Level I Fieldwork A: Integration and Practice Applications</td>
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<td>OCTH 1019</td>
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<td>Conditions Impacting Occupation, Participation, &amp; Health I: Adult/Older Adult</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTH 1031</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Performance and Participation: Therapeutic Applications</td>
<td>3 CR</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTH 1040</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles and Practices II: Rehabilitation, Disability, Aging, and Participation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTH 1052</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles and Practices I: Wellness and Mental Health</td>
<td>2 CR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTH 1051</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level I Fieldwork B: Integration and Practice Applications</td>
<td>6 CR</td>
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<td>OCTH 1029</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Performance and Participation: Therapeutic Applications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTH 1040</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles and Practices II: Rehabilitation, Disability, Aging, and Participation</td>
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<td>OCTH 1052</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester THREE - FALL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Performance and Participation: Skills and Client Factors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Beings across the Lifespan</td>
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<td>OCTH 1010</td>
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<td>OT Practice</td>
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<td>Communication Techniques</td>
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<td>PSRT 1102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Beings across the Lifespan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester TWO - SUMMER</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Dynamics</td>
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<td>PSRT 1103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becoming an OT Professional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy Foundations for the OTA</td>
<td>3 CR</td>
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<td>Becoming an OT Professional</td>
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<td>Semester FIVE - SUMMER</td>
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<td>Communication Techniques</td>
<td>3 CR</td>
</tr>
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<td>PSRT 1102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Seminar I</td>
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<td>OCTH 1071</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becoming an OT Professional</td>
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<td>Professional Seminar II</td>
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<td>OCTH 2072</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTA Practice: Fieldwork II, Adult/Older Adult</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy Foundations for the OTA</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTH 1010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Techniques</td>
<td>3 CR</td>
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<td>PSRT 1102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becoming an OT Professional</td>
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<td>Level I Fieldwork C: Integration and Practice Applications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conditions Impacting Occupation, Participation &amp; Health II: Children and Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTH 1032</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Principles and Practices III: Children and Youth</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTH 1053</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Seminar I</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTH 1071</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTA Practice: Fieldwork II, Children and Youth</td>
<td>5 CR</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTH 2029</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Seminar II</td>
<td>2 CR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTH 2072</td>
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### Course Descriptions (follows the full-time course sequence)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title and Number</th>
<th>Cr</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FALL ONE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Occupational Therapy Foundations for the OTA</strong>&lt;br&gt;OCTH 1010</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This course teaches the history, philosophy, and values of the occupational therapy profession, and the domain of OT practice identified by the AOTA Practice Framework – III (2014). The concepts of occupation and activity are explored through the completion of an occupational profile and a comprehensive activity analysis. The roles and responsibilities of the OTA, the nature of the OTA/OT supervisory relationship, and regulatory requirements that impact OT practice are topics central to this course.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication Techniques</strong>&lt;br&gt;PSRT 1102</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This course provides students with a foundation of knowledge in all aspects of communication and provides opportunities to practice communication techniques for use in professional situations. Students are introduced to concepts regarding the development of language and communication as they explore various types of communication and language disorders and their impact on daily life and participation. Students learn how culture impacts communication and complete a project that examines concepts of health literacy. Students collaborate to conduct an interview with an adult and a child to develop and document occupational profile.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupational Performance and Participation: Skills and Client Factors</strong>&lt;br&gt;OCTH 1020</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the structure and terminology of the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework –III, this course focuses on the person factors that contribute to occupational performance, expanding upon foundational coursework in the structure and function of the human body, and human development across the lifespan. Students learn to recognize sensory-perceptual and motor skills used in daily activities, and to understand how underlying body functions and structures in part support abilities and skills. An emphasis is placed on the subjective sense of doing and the unity of mind and body when observing, discussing, analyzing, and participating in activities and occupations. Laboratory sessions concentrate on developing therapeutic touch and handling while gathering information on person factors including joint range of motion, gross muscle strength, postural control, sensation, and sensory processing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conditions Impacting Occupation, Participation, &amp; Health I: Adult/Older Adult</strong>&lt;br&gt;OCTH 1031</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the first in a series of two courses in which students study bio-psychosocial conditions and learn how to analyze their potential effect on body functions and structures, skills, occupational performance and participation. Case examples guide an understanding of the natural course of aging and the impact of health conditions on the adult and older adult. The language of the OT Practice Framework and medical terminology are taught and practiced. The course lays the foundation for safe practice with adult populations by instructing students on medication side effects, monitoring vital signs, and following precautions and contraindications.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Level I Fieldwork A: Integration and Practice Applications</strong>&lt;br&gt;OCTH 1019</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>The first of three Level I Fieldwork courses in the OTA curriculum. Students are assigned to a healthcare, educational, or other community setting where they observe and interact with clients across the lifespan under the supervision of an occupational therapist or an occupational therapy assistant and his or her OT supervisor. This first fieldwork experience develops understanding of how various bio-psychosocial conditions can impact an individual’s occupational performance and participation. Students gather information about client’s occupational history, observe and describe factors that support or hinder occupational performance, and may assist the occupational therapy professional in providing occupation based interventions. Students have the opportunity to practice professional communication and interpersonal skills through interactions with clients, supervisors, and team members. A classroom based pre and post fieldwork seminar clarifies assignments, guides professional skill development, and is used to assess the competencies developed during the combined semester coursework.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Name</td>
<td>Credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Dynamics</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSRT1103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groups are an integral part of psychiatric rehabilitation and occupational therapy service delivery. This course provides students with an understanding of the basic elements of group dynamics and prepares students with the skills needed to become an effective group facilitator. Classroom lectures provide students with information about types of groups and an overview of group dynamics including the stages of group development, group member roles, group norms, and group leadership. Laboratory experiences equip students with skills needed to plan and implement group interventions that address the needs of clients with various disabilities and use a collaborative team approach. Students learn to provide feedback to group members and evaluate the group process. There is an emphasis on teaching students to facilitate skills training groups for people with psychiatric disabilities.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Principles and Practices I: Wellness and Mental Health</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCHT 1051</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building from the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process(3rd ed.), this course focuses on Wellness and Mental Health and the importance of evaluating Occupation, Client Factors and Performance Patterns for effective outcomes in a variety of practice settings. This course enables students to understand how mental health and substance use challenges impact Occupation, Client Factors, Performance Skills (sensory, perceptual, coping and communication and social) and Performance Patterns (roles, habits, routines and rituals). Students gain an understanding of OT process including the evaluations and observational approaches necessary to select interventions and modalities offered by OT practitioners and other healthcare professionals. Students participate in classroom lectures and discussions, lab activities, as well as complete assignments. This course will prepare students to engage and involve persons with mental, emotional and social challenges in the OT process as a means for improved occupational performance, quality of life, health and wellness, social participation, self advocacy and role competence.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Performance and Participation: Therapeutic Applications</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCHT 1040</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This course fosters the student’s ability to provide therapeutic intervention through practice in analyzing, grading, and adapting activities and environments for individuals with varied abilities across the lifespan. Students explore ways to teach and train clients and significant others as part of the OT intervention process. Preparatory modalities are taught and practiced as a support to occupation based interventions. Students learn to follow standard precautions and monitor vital signs and this is reinforced throughout the course to ensure safe practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles and Practices II: Rehabilitation, Disability, Aging, and Participation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCHT 1052</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This course focuses on the practice areas of Rehabilitation, Disability and Participation, and Productive Aging. Through class instruction, simulation, practice, and reflection on case scenarios, students learn the OT process (OT Practice Framework-III, AOTA 2014), as they assist in identifying the intervention approach and developing a plan that is guided by a practice model(s) and evidence. Students practice implementing interventions and completing documentation based on case study scenarios representative of adult practice settings. Psychosocial, cognitive, and contextual factors that affect participation for adults and older adults are emphasized throughout the course.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Level I Fieldwork B: Integration and Practice Applications</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCHT 1029</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The second of three Level I Fieldwork courses in the OTA curriculum. Students are assigned to a healthcare, educational, or other community setting where they observe and assist with the occupational therapy process for adult or older adult clients under the supervision of an occupational therapist, or an occupational therapy assistant and his or her OT supervisor. Level I FW – B will provide students the opportunity to assist in planning and providing occupational therapy services following the OT process as described in the OT Practice Framework III. The fieldwork experience provides the opportunity to practice skills developed during the combined semester coursework including documentation in accordance with the requirements of the practice setting. It is expected that students demonstrate professional skills and adhere to all safety procedures as appropriate to the setting. A pre and post fieldwork seminar clarifies assignments, guides professional development, and is used to assess the competencies developed during the combined semester coursework.</td>
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<td>SUMMER ONE</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conditions Impacting Occupation, Participation &amp; Health II: Children and Youth</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTH 1032</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>This is the second in a series of two courses in which students study bio-psychosocial conditions and learn how to analyze the potential effect on body functions and structures, the development of skills, occupational performance and participation. Case examples guide an understanding of conditions common to children including heritable diseases, genetic conditions, disability, trauma, and injury. The course furthers mastery of medical terminology, and an understanding of the precautions, contraindications, medication side effects, and safety issues necessary for practice with infants, toddlers, children, and adolescents. Contextual factors that support health and wellness throughout child/adolescent development are discussed.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

| Principles and Practices III: Children and Youth | 2 |
| OCTH 1053 | 2 |
| This course focuses on the Occupational Therapy practice area of Children and Youth. Through class instruction, simulation, practice, and reflection on case scenarios, students learn the OT process (OT Practice Framework-III), as they assist in identifying an intervention approach and developing an intervention plan that is guided by a practice model(s) and evidence. Students practice implementing interventions and completing documentation based on case scenarios from practice settings inclusive of children and youth. Psychosocial, cognitive, and contextual factors that affect participation for children and youth are emphasized throughout the course. |

| Professional Seminar I | 1 |
| OCTH 1071 | 1 |
| Professional Seminar I is the first of two that support the student’s transition to Level II Fieldwork and OT Practice. This seminar highlights the roles, professional conduct and responsibilities of the OTA including working within a team and supervisory relationship. The course focuses on the knowledge necessary to assist with the management of OT including understanding legislation, regulations and ethics, reimbursement systems and documentation requirements, quality improvement, program development, and marketing. Students complete the NBCOT OTA Knowledge Exam before the start of the fall semester as a first step in preparing for the NBCOT Certification Exam for the OTA. |

| Level I Fieldwork C: Integration and Practice Applications | 1 |
| OCTH 1039 | 1 |
| The third of three Level I Fieldwork courses in the OTA curriculum. Students are assigned to a healthcare, educational, or other community setting where they observe and assist with the occupational therapy process for children and youth under the supervision of an occupational therapist, or an occupational therapy assistant and his or her OT supervisor. Level I FW – C will provide students the opportunity to assist in planning and providing occupational therapy services following the OT process as described in the OT Practice Framework II (2008). The fieldwork experience provides the opportunity to practice skills developed during the combined semester coursework including documentation in accordance with the requirements of the practice setting. It is expected that students demonstrate professional skills and adhere to all safety procedures as appropriate to the setting. A pre and post fieldwork seminar clarifies assignments, guides professional development, and is used to assess the competencies developed during the combined semester coursework. |
### FALL TWO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTA Practice: Fieldwork II, Adult/Older Adult</strong>&lt;br&gt;OCTH 2019</td>
<td>An in-depth, 8-week fieldwork education experience with the adult or older adult population, requiring the student to gather information, assist in planning, and deliver occupational therapy services under the direct supervision of an occupational therapist or an occupational therapy assistant. The student must exhibit professionalism include safe and ethical practices and clinical reasoning appropriate to the occupational therapy assistant role. The student must demonstrate entry level competence for an OTA as measured by the American Occupational Therapy Association Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Student.</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OTA Practice: Fieldwork II, Children and Youth</strong>&lt;br&gt;OCTH 2029</td>
<td>An in-depth, 8-week fieldwork education experience with children and youth requiring the student to gather information, assist in planning, and deliver occupational therapy services under the direct supervision of an occupational therapist or an occupational therapy assistant. The student must exhibit professionalism include safe and ethical practices and clinical reasoning appropriate to the occupational therapy assistant role. The student must demonstrate entry level competence for an OTA as measured by the American Occupational Therapy Association Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Student.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Seminar II</strong>&lt;br&gt;OCTH 2072</td>
<td>This seminar is concurrent with OTA Practice Level II Fieldwork A and B and is the second in a series of two courses that support the student’s transition to Level II fieldwork, practice and employment. Selected topics are considered each week including the contextual influences on the practice settings where students are completing fieldwork, professional development and continuing competence, supervision, becoming a fieldwork educator, and professional advocacy. Students create an electronic portfolio as they progress through fieldwork that can be used when seeking employment. Attendance at the New Jersey OT Association annual conference and participation in the Rutgers School of Biomedical and Health Science’s Inter-professional Education Day are seminar highlights. The processes for preparing for and taking the NBCOT Certification Exam and obtaining State Licensure are reviewed as part of this seminar.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graduate Outcomes
Upon completion of the OTA program the graduate will:

1. Become a COTA (Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant) by successfully passing the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy Assistant (NBCOT) exam within one year of graduation.
2. Demonstrate the roles and responsibilities of the OTA as defined by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), consistent with the licensure regulations for an OTA in the State of New Jersey.
3. Communicate effectively in an understandable and professional manner with clients, families, supervisors, colleagues, and the public.
4. Produce clear and understandable documentation according to the requirements of the facility, federal and state laws, regulatory and payer requirements, and AOTA.
5. Deliver occupational therapy services under the supervision of an occupational therapist (OT) in accordance with the AOTA Practice Framework:
   - Practice in a safe, ethical, and collaborative manner under the supervision of an occupational therapist in accordance with the regulations of the healthcare, educational, or community settings.
   - Provide occupational therapy services to persons, groups, and populations from diverse experiences and cultures in health care, educational and community settings.
   - Contribute to the evaluation process of the person, group, or population, by gathering information, implementing assigned assessments, and reporting results to the OT and treatment team.
   - Under the guidance of an OT, provide occupational therapy interventions in accordance with evidence-based OT practice models that support the philosophy and values of the profession.
   - Encourage, advise, and coach persons, caregivers, groups, and populations who experience physical, psychosocial, cognitive challenges and/or developmental disorders or delays, or are negatively impacted by the aging process, to choose and practice occupations and skills that support adaptation and resilience.
   - Problem-solve to devise, in collaboration with the client, OT, and team, alternative contexts, environmental adaptations, and/or task modifications to support participation in valued occupations, routines, and roles.
• Teach individuals, groups, and populations about the health promoting associations between meaningful occupation and healthy development, positive health outcomes, and well-being; and advocate for the provision of occupational therapy services.

• Exhibit and commit to refining client centered practices including the therapeutic use of occupation, interpersonal, communication, and teaching-learning tactics that consider the interests, values, and needs of diverse individuals, caregivers, groups and populations.

6. Contribute to the delivery of high-quality, cost-effective and integrated care as a team member in health, education, and community settings:
   • Maintain, organize, and prioritize workload to meet the requirements of the practice setting.
   • Participate in ongoing quality improvement and implement changes as needed to ensure quality services are delivered and outcomes are measured.

7. Participate as an occupational therapy professional in local, state, and national organizations.
   • Advocate for occupational therapy services and for the recipient of those service
   • Uphold the ethical standards, values, and attitudes of the Occupational Therapy Profession
   • Comply with requirements for continued competence through formal and/or continuing education, and by actively seeking and participating in regular supervision.
Certification

Graduates of an accredited OTA Program are eligible to sit for the Certification Examination for the Occupational Therapy Assistant administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT).

NBCOT publishes resources for exam preparation and competency assessment, available at http://www.nbcot.org

NBCOT Certification Exam

The OTA Program prepares each student for the NBCOT Certification Exam throughout the curriculum and requires each student to take the NBCOT Occupational Therapy Knowledge Exam (OTKE) at the completion of the final semester before beginning fieldwork. The OTKE results provide the Program Director with information about the class’ performance across the NBCOT domains. This allows the Program Director to prepare remedial activities to assist students in preparing for the Certification Exam. During the final semester, all students are required to take and pass the NBCOT OTA Practice Examination.

Licensure

The Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA) is eligible to apply for licensure in New Jersey and other states. The COTA must have a license to practice in the State of New Jersey. The New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety’s Division of Consumer Affairs maintains the Occupational Therapy Advisory Council to license Occupational Therapy Professionals in New Jersey. The web site for the NJOT Advisory Council includes the OTA licensure application, regulations and statutes, and can be accessed by going to:

http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/ot/Applications/Application-for-Licensure.pdf
Ethical Standards

The OTA Program supports and reflects the policies of the AOTA and the Rutgers School of Health Professions. As such, the curriculum teaches adherence to the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and Ethics Standards (2015) and the Code of Student Behavior published/referenced in the SHRP Student Handbook. The AOTA Code of Ethics can be retrieved from http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Practice/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics.pdf

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is not tolerated. Any student who is the victim of sexual violence should seek immediate help. Please refer to: http://shp.rutgers.edu/current_students/shrp_oss_home.html

And


Academic Calendar

The Student Academic Calendar is subject to change and is available online at:

http://apps.shrp.rutgers.edu/projects/shrpweb-cf/calendars/PDFs/20152016 students.pdf

Students must follow the calendar of the assigned facility while completing fieldwork education.
OTA Program Policies

Essential Functions/Standards for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Student

The following standards pertain to particular cognitive, motor, behavioral and social skills that are associated with the educational process of the OTA Program within the School of Health Related Professions at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Students are expected to demonstrate and apply these standards in interactions with classmates, colleagues, academic faculty, fieldwork educators and potential clients regardless of the person’s race, color, creed, gender, or life experiences or challenges.

Observational Standards:

A. Practice occupational therapy assistant skills and techniques under the supervision of a licensed occupational therapy assistant or a licensed occupational therapist, consistent with client status and desired goals, within given time constraints:
   a) Gather and report client data.
   b) Assess function in a safe, reliable, and efficient manner (for e.g. self-care skills, mobility and transfers).
   c) Assist with the development of intervention plans.

B. Attend and participate in didactic and fieldwork education and training on and off campus including traveling to a variety of fieldwork facilities.

C. Demonstrate the use of accepted techniques accurately and safely when using equipment and materials of the profession

Communication Standards:

A. Demonstrate effective, professional oral and written communication in the English language.

Intellectual/Conceptual Standards:

A. Perform all required oral and written examinations, assignments, projects, and/or demonstrations.
Motor Skill Standards:

A. Participate in laboratory activities that require hands-on contact with classmates and instructors in various stages of moderate undress for clinical training.
B. Participate in physical activity involving lifting, bending, moving, and supporting others.
C. Utilize hand and mechanical tools safely and effectively.

Behavioral and Social Standards:

A. Maintain a current CPR certification and demonstrate the ability to perform CPR.
B. Communicate with clients using empathetic and supportive responses.
C. Develop and exhibit professional, ethical demeanor in didactic and fieldwork environments including the ability to:
   a) Participate in the process of self-evaluation and goal development.
   b) Give and receive constructive feedback and adjust or modify behavior and responses according to the constructive feedback.
   c) Collaborate with others on projects and assignments.
   d) Comply with policies and procedures of fieldwork facility including regarding work hours, safety, patient confidentiality, and infection control.
   e) Adapt to the stresses of an intensive training program in preparation for the demands of the fieldwork experience (for example, heavy academic schedule, fast paced fieldwork setting, managing multiple clients and tasks simultaneously and efficiently, working with persons experiencing distress, trauma or functional limitations, working with clients and/or their families or identified supporters who are coping with trauma, illness and disability, or working with people who are in end stages of life).
D. The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program uses web-enhance and web-based design. The technology related competencies required include:
   a) The ability to perform basic operations of the computer
   b) The ability to use software applications such as Word and Power Point
   c) The ability to connect, access, and browse the internet using a high speed connection
   d) The ability to use on-line communication tools including e-mail
   e) Software installation for security and virus protection
Foundations for Student Success in the OTA Curriculum:

1. Students are expected to read and regularly refer to both the OTA Program Manual and SHP Student Handbook. These manuals describe important School, Department, and Program Policies and Procedures.

2. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions and remain in the class for the entire session. The only reason for missing class is illness or family emergency. It is expected that students will notify the instructor in advance regarding a pending absence. Class attendance and participation contribute to the final grade in each course.

3. Students are expected to prepare for each class by completing all readings and assignments. Students are expected to take notes during class. Class notes and assigned readings must be reviewed and studied following each class session.

4. Students may use computers, tablets, and phones in class only as a means of referring to lecture or lab materials and for taking notes. Text messaging, e-mailing, web-surfing and using face book are not allowed during class time. Some class instructors will not allow any devices in the classroom.

5. Students are expected to engage in classroom discussions and lab activities. Conversations between class members are distracting to the course instructor and other students.

6. Students are expected to organize materials from each class into a notebook or binder.

7. Students are expected to maintain and regularly update a calendar including due dates for assignments, meetings, fieldwork obligations, and appointments with faculty.

8. Students are expected to proofread/read aloud all written assignments before turning the assignment in to the instructor.

9. Students are expected to respond to faculty e-mail within 48 hours during the regular semester.

10. Students are expected to discuss any issue of concern directly with the course instructor first, followed by the faculty advisor and program director as outlined in the program manual.

11. Students are expected to maintain the cleanliness and organization of the classrooms and laboratory spaces.
Student Services

The Rutgers SHP Office of Student and Alumni Affairs is devoted to providing support services that will assist students in their pursuit of personal and academic success. A variety of services are offered and extended to all SHRP OTA students. They include but are not limited to academic tutoring, counseling services, College survival tips, Educational Opportunity Fund (E.O.F.), mental health services and services for students with disabilities.

For more information go to the Offices web-site:
http://shrp.rutgers.edu/current_students/shrp_oss_home.html
or contact a representative at 973-972-7939 e-mail: OSAA@shrp.rutgers.edu

Additional access to counseling and other supportive services is available through the Student Assistance Facilitator (SAF). The SAF for the programs at the Scotch Plains campus is Dr. Melissa Roberts, 908-889-2470, robertmm@shrp.rutgers.edu

Student Health and Wellness Services

OTA students may obtain health services on a fee for service basis at an SHRP Campus Health Center located on the Newark, New Brunswick, or Stratford NJ campuses.

Newark Campus
Student Health & Wellness Center
Doctors Office Center (DOC)
Suite 1750
Newark, NJ 07103
(973) 972-8219 Phone
(973) 972-0018 Fax
Hours of Operation:
Monday - Thursday 7:30 AM - 5 PM
Friday 7:30 AM - 4 PM

New Brunswick/Piscataway Campuses
Student Health Services
317 George Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
(732) 235-5160 Phone
(732) 235-7734 Fax
Hours of Operation: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8 AM - 5 PM
Tuesday and Thursday 8 AM - 7:30 PM
The Student Wellness Program (SWP) is a free and confidential counseling service provided by University Behavioral HealthCare, which helps students deal effectively with stressors and other pressures related to undergraduate and graduate school, as well as other personal problems that might impact one's academic performance (e.g., problems within one's academic setting). Additionally, services are available to family members who reside within your household.

The Student Wellness offices are open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm during the day, and evening appointments are also available (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays until 8 PM). To schedule an appointment please call (973) 972-5429

Student Counseling Services are additionally offered through the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs, in person, by telephone, on line using e-mail, or through a private discussion forum. Arrangements for in person meetings on the Scotch Plains campus can be made. Please refer to Student Counseling Services website http://shrp.rutgers.edu/current_students/shrp_oss_scs.html

**Services for Students with Disabilities**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: http://shp.rutgers.edu/current_students/disability_services/register_ds.html. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the OSA web site at: https://cas.rutgers.edu/login?service=https://apps.shrp.rutgers.edu/projects/disabilities/cas_Validate.cfm&CFID=35912&CFTOKEN=f5b7579709604a44-5AC9F92B-155D-14A0-006D3A514224E2CD
Supported Education Services:

Supports education services for students with psychiatric disabilities are also available through a Supported Education Program that is affiliated with the Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation & Counseling Professions. To access services contact Michelle Mullen, at mullenmi@shrp.rutgers.edu or by phone: 908-889-2513.

Students with Legal Concerns

A legal conviction may impact a graduate’s ability to be eligible to sit for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) Exam for the Occupational Therapy Assistant. An individual who is considering entering an OT educational program or who has already entered an OT educational program can have his or her background reviewed by requesting an Early Determination Review. The fee for this review is $100.00.

For information on candidate code of conduct, character, and early review contact:
Credentialing Services at NBCOT
12 S. Summit Avenue, Suite 100
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
(301) 990-7979
http://www.nbcot.org

A legal conviction may affect a graduate’s ability to obtain state licensure as an OTA. Any student with prior convictions is encouraged to contact the pertinent State Advisory Council or Licensure Board.

Within the State of New Jersey, The Department of Law and Public Safety’s Division of Consumer Affairs maintains the Occupational Therapy Advisory Council to license Occupational Therapy Professionals. The web site for the Advisory Council includes the OTA licensure application and pertinent regulations and statutes and can be accessed by going to:

http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/ot/Applications/Application-for-Licensure.pdf

Each individual accepted for admission to the OTA Program is required to have a criminal background check in accordance with Rutgers SHRP Academic Affairs Policy “Criminal Background Checks for Accepted Applicants for Admission to Rutgers Schools and Educational Programs and for Currently Enrolled Students”. This policy can be retrieved through the SHRP

As per the SHRP Student Handbook each OTA student is required to notify the School of any future convictions, guilty pleas or no contest pleas to any crime, misdemeanor or other offense; and of any future arrests, detentions, charges or investigations by any law enforcement authorities.

The Rutgers SHRP maintains Memoranda of Understanding with clinical facilities for OTA fieldwork education. The clinical facility may accept the University’s statement that a criminal background check with outcome deemed acceptable by the University was completed at the time of program admission, or may require the student to obtain a more recent or facility specific background check, and may require fingerprinting.

**Student Identification Card**

Each student must obtain, carry, and display a Rutgers Identification Card which must be worn for all fieldwork education activities. Instructions for obtaining the Card are provided at the OTA Program Orientation.

This non-transferrable Rutgers Identification Card enables the student to use the library, other University services, and is required to receive and cash student financial aid checks. In case of loss, the student must contact the Department of Public Safety campus office. Each student is required to return this Identification card upon graduation or separation from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

**Health Requirements**

Each incoming student is required to complete the immunizations and other health requirements prior to the first day of classes. This information is mailed to all accepted students and must be submitted prior to registering for classes. Each student should retain a copy of all health documentation for his or her personal files. Please refer to \url{http://njms.rutgers.edu/departments/family_medicine/shs/immun_shrp.cfm}
category one for specific requirements.
Mandatory Health Insurance

Each full-time SHP student, and each part-time student who is participating in fieldwork education, is required to have health insurance coverage. Each student is billed automatically by Rutgers for Health Insurance coverage. The student can reverse the billing only by submitting a waiver form demonstrating that he/she has comparable coverage. This assertion of comparable coverage must be reviewed and approved by University Health Plans (UHP) prior to enrollment in classes or by the deadline dates outlined in the policy. Refer to: [http://shp.rutgers.edu/prospective_students/admissions/admissions4_insurance_requ.html](http://shp.rutgers.edu/prospective_students/admissions/admissions4_insurance_requ.html)

CPR Certification

Each student is required to be certified, update and maintain certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) by the American Heart Association, Red Cross, or an equivalent College course. Evidence of certification and ongoing certification must be uploaded to the Typhon System. Any student who does not complete CPR certification cannot begin fieldwork and this may result in a failing grade for this class.

Communication

Each student is asked to address faculty using the person’s professional title for example “Professor” or, when appropriate, “Doctor”. Each faculty member has established office hours indicated on course syllabi within which time a student may stop in to the office or identified location with a question or concern. The faculty members are available to meet with students at other times by appointment.

Each student is required to obtain a Rutgers e-mail account and is expected to check it on a daily basis during the academic year. The faculty contact students regarding classes, assignments, notices etc. via Rutgers E-mail accounts only and do not contact students through private accounts. Information about accessing E-mail and other Systems through the Rutgers portal may be obtained by going to New Student Access to Technology Services via: [http://shp.rutgers.edu/tech4sure/student_services.htm](http://shp.rutgers.edu/tech4sure/student_services.htm)
Please refer to this website for recommended technology specifications and resources.

Please deposit all mail for OTA Faculty in the mailbox just outside of the OTA Lab, room 307, or within the mailbox of the Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Profession’s support personnel through Ms. Lia Lewis or Ms. Debra Rich (room 518).
Faculty will return e-mail messages and/or phone calls from students within 72 hours. Students should not use text messaging to contact faculty.

Students have the opportunity to meet with the OTA Program Director periodically to discuss the professional, school, and program issues or any topic of concern or interest to the students. Prior to the meeting, any student may submit a topic he or she wishes to have discussed.

**Complaints and Grievances**

Student complaints related to grades, classroom instruction, or other Rutgers SHP Services should be communicated at the program level by consulting with and presenting documentation to individuals (in this order):

1. The faculty member directly involved with the issue.
2. Faculty advisor for course related issues and/or Academic Fieldwork Coordinator for fieldwork issues.
3. OTA Program Director
4. Department Chairperson- Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Professions

The OTA Program will not retaliate against any student who files a complaint. The program maintains a record of student complaints secured within the office of the OTA Program Director including nature of the complaint and the resulting action. Please refer to the SHP Student Handbook for the School's Policy and Procedure regarding student grievances.

**Program Facilities and Equipment**

The OTA Program is housed on the Rutgers campus in Scotch Plains, New Jersey, within a large three story building. There is adequate parking around the fully accessible building. The surrounding campus is scenic and accessible by way of paved walkways. There are two student lounge areas that accommodate light meal preparation and two atriums with vending machines. The Scotch Plains campus is fully equipped to support student learning including a 32-seat computer lab. The Student Lounge is located in room 432 and a study area in room 447 on the first floor. There is additional study space located in the atrium area on the second floor.

The OTA Program uses designated, A-V equipped classroom space, a demonstration kitchen in room 332 and the OTA Labs in rooms 307 and 528.
The Rutgers University Libraries statewide system services and resources support the OTA program and. Campus libraries are located in Newark, New Brunswick, , Piscataway, and Camden. The Rutgers University Libraries web site (https://libraries.rutgers.edu), as well as two specialized health sciences libraries, provides access to electronic databases, print and e-journals with full text articles linked through the various databases, and print and e-books. The Robert Wood Johnson Library (https://libraries.rutgers.edu/rwj) and the George F. Smith Library (https://libraries.rutgers.edu) have web pages which highlight popular health sciences links to content which support academic programs. Interlibrary loan service is also available to students, faculty, and staff. Both articles and books will be obtained through this service from other libraries (see https://www.rulill.rutgers.edu/illiad/RULILL/logon.html). Reference services are available at both health sciences libraries, as well as electronically via the Ask-a-Librarian service linked on various library web pages at https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/help_email. Reference service is available on the Scotch Plains campus on Monday afternoons.

The OTA Program is proud to have as a resource The Claire Glasser Library which is located on the Scotch Plains campus in room 307. Claire Glasser, MA, OTR, FAOTA, has been instrumental within New Jersey as an Occupational Therapy Educator. She is a founding faculty member of Kean University’s Occupational Therapy Program, an advocate, and a mentor. Professor Glasser has graciously donated textbooks and journals that are available to OTA students, faculty and fieldwork educators.

The OTA Program relies on the diligence of all students and faculty to protect the program space and equipment. Each student is expected to maintain the cleanliness and organization of the classroom and laboratory spaces. All trash and garbage must be disposed of in the designated receptacles at the end of each class session. All equipment must be stored properly after each class session.

Each student must abide by the policy described below for borrowing equipment from the OTA laboratory and books or resources from the OTA Library.

**Equipment Loan**

Students have access to laboratory space, equipment, supplies and resources by appointment or any time a faculty member is on campus.

All equipment and resources are maintained with an inventory tracking system. Resources such as textbooks and journals are stamped and tracked within the inventory system.
Equipment and supplies can be borrowed from the OTA laboratory during this open laboratory time but must be returned and signed back in at the end of this time. Students and OTA faculty members may borrow textbooks and journals for a two-week period.

Health and Safety for Students, Faculty, Staff, and Clients

The School of Health Professions (SHP) and the Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program are committed to ensuring the health and safety of each student, faculty member, and client during educational activities. Written policies and procedures regarding appropriate use of equipment and supplies and for all educational activities that have implications for health and safety of clients, students, and faculty are published in the OTA Program Manual.

Each incoming student is required to complete health requirements and submit documentation of such to the Student Health and Wellness Center prior to enrollment. OTA students must complete the health requirements for those who will have patient contact and are at risk of exposure to blood or potentially infectious body fluids.

Each incoming student full-time student and each part-time student who will be participating in fieldwork education is required to have health insurance coverage. Each student is automatically billed by Rutgers for health insurance coverage and can reverse this billing by submitting a waiver form demonstrating that he/she has comparable coverage.

Each student is required to be certified and/or update and maintain certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) by the American Heart Association, Red Cross, or an equivalent College course. Evidence of certification and ongoing certification must be uploaded to the Typhon system. Any student who does not complete CPR certification cannot begin fieldwork and this may result in a failing grade for this class.

Campus Health and Safety

The Rutgers Emergency Response Guide for the Scotch Plains campus is posted in the Occupational Therapy Lab and at

http://rehs.rutgers.edu/online_training/rtk_train/CH10.html

This comprehensive document outlines procedures including those for fire, spills, medical emergencies, bomb threats, evacuation, and lockdown.

The Department of Public Safety has a Central Communications Office located on the Scotch
Plains Campus. The Office of Public Safety personnel communicate with outside agencies, fire departments, and emergency medical services, and dispatch personnel as needed. The Public Safety Officers include both police and security officers on the Scotch Plains campus. Red emergency phones that connect directly to Public Safety are available on every floor and in the OTA Lab.

The Office of Emergency Management http://emergency.rutgers.edu/ coordinates the University’s response to disasters and emergencies. During an actual emergency, staff members coordinate response and recovery through the Emergency Operations Center. Evacuation plans are posted on each floor of the Scotch Plains Campus. Alert@UMDNJ is a program through the Emergency Management Center that notifies students, faculty, and staff when there is an emergency, hazardous condition, or other situation affecting the University Community through Text message, e-mail, recorded phone message, web-site, Facebook, and Twitter among other methods. Students, faculty, and staff can register for the Rave Alert System which sends alerts to cell phones and facilitates connection with Public Safety through GPS tracking. The Rutgers Portal is regularly updated on incidents and emergencies that impact the University Community.

The following procedures pertain to infection control, maintenance of classroom area, use of program equipment and supplies, body mechanics, and emergency, and must be followed during all OTA educational activities.

As part of the new student orientation, the instructional seminars listed below must be completed and corresponding certificates uploaded to the Typhon system:

http://shp.rutgers.edu/NSO/

A. Infection Control
B. Preventing Workplace Harassment
C. HIPAA
D. If You’re the Victim of Sexual Violence
E. Honor Code/Academic Integrity
F. Program Manuals
G. Essential Functions
H. Enrollment Services

I. Infection Control
A. Hand Washing

Hands must be cleansed on a regular basis to defend against the spread of infection. Hand sanitizing gel can be used as an additional safeguard against infection.

Hands must be washed and dried immediately before and after:

1. Physical contact with another person during OTA laboratory activities
2. Toileting
3. Blowing nose, sneezing, coughing
4. Contact with any contaminated surface
5. Whenever soiled

Procedure for Hand-washing:

- Remove rings and other jewelry on the hands/wrist
- Thoroughly wet hands under running water
- Apply anti-bacterial soap and rub hands together for at least 20 seconds, cleaning up to wrist area and between fingers
- Rinse hands thoroughly under running water
- Turn water off using a paper towel and dry hands completely, and discard the towel.
- Open the bathroom door using a clean paper towel and dispose of it outside of the bathroom.

B. Standard Precautions

Standard Precautions must be followed when there is potential for exposure to another individual's blood or body fluid; for example when touching in an around the mouth, assisting an individual with toileting activities, administering first aid, or cleaning up spills that may include blood or body fluids. The following standard precautions apply to OTA laboratory activities that involve potential exposure to body fluids:

1. Gloves must be worn on both hands. An individual with open wounds on the hand must wear gloves during all OTA laboratory activities that involve physical contact between people.
2. Hands must be washed thoroughly after removing gloves
3. Gloves must be changed before and after each contact with another individual
4. A mask and gown must be worn when there is any chance of a splash from body fluids.

II. Maintenance of Classroom, Laboratory and Lounge Areas
Classroom and laboratory areas must be maintained to ensure the health and safety of students and faculty.

A. Trash and Garbage
Faculty and students must remove trash and garbage and dispose of it in the designated receptacles outside of the classroom immediately following the class session. Food is not permitted in the OTA Laboratory, room 307. OTA students may use the microwave oven and refrigerator located in the student lounge. Food must be labeled and removed before the end of each week.

B. Routine Cleaning
Physical plant staff clean desk and countertop surfaces, computer keyboards, and remove trash each business day. Equipment and materials used in the OTA laboratory (room 307) must be cleaned following each use with the Lysol Disinfecting Wipes (refer to Chemicals below).

C. Spills
Small spills must be cleaned up immediately; the Physical Plant Staff must be notified for larger spills and those that may include blood or body fluids.

D. Chemicals
All Chemicals are stored in a locked cabinet and are disposed of as recommended by the manufacturer. Material Data Sheets (MDS) are maintained in a labeled notebook (Claire Glasser Library room 307) for all chemicals in the OTA laboratory and must be consulted before using:

1. Purell Hand Sanitizing Aloe
2. Lysol Disinfecting Wipes
3. Glo Germ Oil Base and Powder

III. Safety during OTA Laboratory Activities
Students must come to the OTA laboratory prepared to work safely in close physical contact with classmates. It is the responsibility of each student to inform the laboratory instructor about any medical condition or other concern that might impact participation in the laboratory experience.
A. Laboratory Dress Code

Students and faculty must dress in comfortable/lose fitting pants and short sleeved top, (dress in layers), sneakers or rubber soled shoes, no open toes allowed. All large jewelry must be removed.

B. Body Mechanics

The use of proper body mechanics is taught and reinforced ongoing basis during the OTA curriculum to help protect the safety of the student and the client now and in the future.

General Principles of Good Body Mechanics:

1. Wear rubber sole shoes for a firm foundation
2. Maintain feet flat on the floor separated by about 12 inches
3. Keep the back straight
4. When lifting an object or a person
   a. Continue to maintain the back in a straight position with your feet apart, lower the body by bending from hips and knees, not at the waist
   b. Rotate the entire body when turning
   c. Lift the person or object keeping the load close to your body and using your arm and leg muscles
   d. Ask for help!

C. First Aid

A first aid kit is located in the OTA Laboratory (room 307) to assist in providing first aid for minor skin abrasions and cuts.

D. Equipment and Supplies

Equipment and supplies must be used in a manner that ensures the safety of students, faculty, and clients. Procedures for the safe and appropriate use of tools, equipment and supplies appear in the “OTA Program Equipment Binder”, stored in the Claire Glasser Library. The use of specialized equipment is reviewed with students by the OTA faculty during laboratory sessions. The instructional procedures must then be reviewed by each student prior to using the equipment. Any student who has a question or concern about using a tool, piece of equipment, or supply must seek assistance from an OTA faculty member prior to attempting to use the tool, equipment or supply.
Equipment is inspected by the OTA Program Faculty and/or staff on a regular basis to ensure safety. Equipment that is not operating properly is removed from service. Tools, equipment and supplies must be stored after each use.

IV. Emergencies

Emergencies on the Scotch Plains campus must be reported by calling 9-1-1 on campus, notifying the Rutgers Police.

A. Fire

An individual who discovers smoke or must follow the RACE procedure:

1. Rescue/ remove anyone in immediate danger (if possible)
2. Activate fire alarm and alert others in the area
3. Close doors to contain smoke and fire
4. Evacuate the building using the nearest exit and report to the rear parking lot, stepping away from the building

Public Safety must be notified immediately and a fire alarm should be located and activated.

B. Evacuation

When there is a danger in remaining inside the Scotch Plains campus building because of fire, smoke, or other conditions, faculty will direct the evacuation of students by taking personal belongings, closing the door, and proceeding to the nearest exit, using stairs instead of elevator. All OTA students should report to the rear parking lot, stepping away from the building.

C. Lockdown

The Office of Emergency Management provides the following instructions for Lockdown to be used when there is a potential or imminent threat of violence and it is too dangerous to evacuate.

1. Notify Public Safety immediately
2. Notify others in the Department
3. Secure yourself and others in the nearest office, classroom, or other space that has a door and can be closed.
4. Lock or barricade the door to the room if possible
5. Close windows, pull shades, or close blinds if possible
6. Turn off all lights and remain quiet to give the appearance of an unoccupied space.
7. Crouch down near the floor away from windows and doors
8. Remain in lockdown until a law enforcement officer or other first responder comes to get you.
9. Do not attempt to evacuate the building; be prepared to ignore the fire alarm unless you have firsthand knowledge that there is a fire in the building, you are in imminent danger, or you have been advised to evacuate by a Public Safety Officer or another person in authority.

Incident Reports

In accordance with the SHP Student Handbook, incident reports must be completed in the case of an accident during an on-campus activity. The Office of Risk and Claims Management ((973) 972-6277) and the OTA Program Director are to be contacted immediately if the accident involves injury. Incident Report forms may be obtained through the Office of Public Safety and the Occupational Therapy Program Director.
Academic Policies

Each student must adhere to the academic policies documented and referenced in the Rutgers SHP Student Handbook - [http://shrp.rutgers.edu/current_students/pdf/Handbook.pdf](http://shrp.rutgers.edu/current_students/pdf/Handbook.pdf)

The Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Professions faculty strive to create an environment rich in opportunities, experiences, and knowledge that enhance the education of students. Faculty members are committed to high standards of excellence in preparing future professionals. The faculty continually access current scholarly literature and scientific research to inform their academic and professional practice and use this information to design academic and fieldwork experiences that provide a stimulating, professional atmosphere. Each student is expected to maintain high standards of personal and professional integrity, a caring attitude, and a motivation to learn, grow and succeed. Each student is expected to participate as an active learner in the educational process. Active learning involves the following:

- Taking full advantage of learning opportunities
- Dedicating time and energy to complete required coursework, assignments and fieldwork experiences
- Assume personal responsibility for learning and for seeking clarification, assistance, and resources to address any learning difficulty or challenges
- Contribute to your own learning and that of other students
- Making a commitment to developing a base of knowledge and skills

Registration

Full-time students in the OTA Program are “Block Registered” (automatically registered) because the course sequence is mapped out from the first semester of enrollment to the last. Each student is registered prior to the start of the semester for the appropriate class schedule. Part-time students in the OTA Program must register themselves with PIN number provided by enrollment services, as advised by the OTA Program Director.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance and participation in class, laboratories, on-line discussions, and fieldwork education is integral to the process of becoming an OT professional. Each student is expected to arrive on time and remain until the class is dismissed and attend all scheduled
classes and fieldwork sessions. When a student misses class or fieldwork, the absence is recorded. Each student must notify the course instructor when unable to attend class, lab, or fieldwork, prior to the start of the scheduled session. A student who misses more than one class for any reason will not meet the requirements for a final grade of “A” in that class, and a third absence will reduce the grade further. The specifics of this policy are documented in each course syllabus.

**Recurrent absenteeism is not acceptable.**

Each student must arrive to every class, lab, or fieldwork session on time and must stay until the end. Lateness to class and/or leaving class early is disruptive and not acceptable. Any student who is late for more than one class, or leaves early for more than one class will lose points off the final class grade. The specifics of this policy are documented in each course syllabus.

Each student must be available during the entire week of the established final exam period each semester. Final exam schedules are subject to last minute changes and examinations may be scheduled up until and including the last day.

Any student who stops attending class for any reason should contact the instructor, faculty advisor, and SHRP registrar to withdraw from the class.

**Inclement Weather**

Announcements regarding inclement weather emergencies are made on the Rutgers-SHRP website. On assigned fieldwork days each student should follow the inclement weather procedure established at the fieldwork site, and should use his or her judgment concerning safe travel to fieldwork when weather conditions are inclement. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the fieldwork supervisor concerning inclement weather and to arrange to make up missed work.

**Religious Accommodation**

When requested, reasonable accommodations are made for religious beliefs such as time off to attend religious observances and modification in laboratory attire and procedures. These accommodations do not exempt the student from complying with academic and fieldwork requirements.
Dress Code

Each student is expected to dress appropriately for class, lab, fieldwork, and for all meetings associated with OTA program activities. Laboratory dress code is as follows: comfortable/lose fitting pants and top; dress in layers and wear a short sleeved shirt; sneakers or rubber soled shoes, and no open toe shoes are allowed. Each student must have available a watch with a second hand for laboratory and fieldwork sessions. Body art and/or piercings must be covered or removed for fieldwork education.

Electronic Devices and Social Networking

Each student must be respectful when using cell phones and other electronic devices and must silence all devices when in classrooms, laboratories, libraries, or clinics. Text messaging, using social media, and internet surfing are not permitted during any part of academic or fieldwork education. All electronic devices that are not being used for the identified purpose of the class must be placed on vibrate or turned off, and stored out of sight.

Communication via social networking (e.g. “Facebook”) must never extend to the OTA faculty, fieldwork educators, or clients.

Faculty/Student Honor Code

(Refer to the SHP Student Handbook)

The SHP faculty believes that students must observe and support high standards of honesty and integrity in all aspects of education, practice, and research. For this reason, all matriculated and non-matriculated students in this course are expected to abide by the School’s Faculty/Student Honor Code and accept responsibility to help ensure that these standards are maintained by reporting violations of the Honor Code observed in others. All violations will be considered with gravest concern and may be punishable with sanctions as severe as suspension or dismissal.

Violations of the Honor Code include cheating, plagiarism and fabrication. These infractions and other types of academic misconduct are described in detail in the SHRP Student Handbook. Violations of academic integrity have both academic and disciplinary consequences. If a professor discovers that a student has cheated on an exam, or plagiarized or fabricated an assignment, he/she will give the student a failing grade on the exam or assignment. The student
may also be referred to Dean of the School of Health Related Professions for disciplinary action. All such violations will be considered with gravest concern and may be punishable with sanctions as severe as suspension or dismissal.

Each student must review and upload a signed and dated copy of the Rutgers-SHP honor code to the Typhon system by September 15. The Faculty/Student Honor Code and related policies on student’s rights, responsibilities and disciplinary procedures are in the current SHP Student Handbook, available on the SHP website at http://shpnet.umdnj.edu/projects/shrpweb-cf/policies/PDFs/6.5%20FACULTY%20and%20STUDENT%20HONOR%20CODE.pdf

All new students are required to complete the SHP Academic Integrity Training which is available at http://shp.rutgers.edu/integrity/

This training must be completed by September 15 and each student must upload the Certificate of Completion to the Typhon system.

Confidentiality

Each student must maintain the confidentiality of all persons encountered during classroom lectures and fieldwork education. When recording notes, reports, or journals, all client and facility identifying information must be removed or blacked out. During case discussion in class, each student must follow HIPAA guidelines in order to maintain confidential client information.

Advisement

Each student is assigned an academic advisor with whom the student is required to meet during the first two weeks of the Fall semester, and during each semester’s advisement period. The faculty advisor and the OTA student establish learning goals; and the advisor is available for guidance in educational matters and referral to resources as needed. The academic advisor monitors the student’s grade point average, professional development, and develops an educational agreement with any student who is placed on academic probation. The faculty advisor ensures each student is properly registered for each semester and may assist the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator in selecting appropriate fieldwork placements as needed.
Instructional Methods

Each student is expected to purchase required class textbooks and resources, complete the reading assignments and participate meaningfully in class discussions and lab activities.

Each student is required to obtain and regularly check their Rutgers e mail. OTA faculty contact students regarding classes, assignments, and notices via this E-mail account and do not contact students through private accounts or via text messaging. Information about accessing E-mail and other systems through the Rutgers Portal may be obtained by going to new student access to technology services via: http://shp.rutgers.edu/tech4sure/student_services.htm

Please refer to recommendations on this website concerning technology specifications and resources for this program.

Wireless internet connection is available to all students who register – see http://shp.rutgers.edu/tech4sure/student_services.htm

The faculty utilize a variety of instructional methods to convey and reinforce the course content in accordance with the OTA Program’s educational philosophy. The methodology includes lecture, demonstration, discussion, small group work, case discussions, reflection, journaling, and a variety of laboratory activities.

Most courses in the OTA Program are web enhanced through Moodle LMS. The Moodle platform is used to provide students with multi-media resource material and provides a venue for group discussion and communication. Course syllabi are also posted on Moodle. To access courses materials on the Moodle site, go to http://moodle.rutgers.edu and enter your portal username and password credentials (same as your email and Banner credentials).

Once logged into Moodle, the student will see the category, “Student Moodle Training” in the upper left hand corner of the page. If you have issues accessing these courses or logging in, contact support helpdesk at 973-972-8676 or moodlehelp@shrp.rutgers.edu 9am until 7pm during weekdays.

- Browsers Supported by Moodle
- Internet Explorer v. 6 and higher
- Mozilla Firefox v. 3 and higher
- Google Chrome (latest version)
- Safari (latest version)
The course syllabi are made available to each student via Moodle or e mail. The course objectives, learning activities, schedule, assignments, required textbooks and other materials, resources, evaluation, and grading criteria are outlines within each syllabus. The syllabus describes the relationship between the course and the overall design of the curriculum.

Typhon System
The OTA Program uses the “Typhon System” as a central place for storage of learning templates and student documents and for communication with and among students, fieldwork educators and faculty. The Typhon System is HIPAA compliant and does not accept client identification data.

Students are oriented to the Typhon System during orientation and should also refer to and use orientation material provided through on line videos within the Typhon System.

Suggested Browser Settings for the Typhon System
In order to experience Typhon Group's web sites properly, please check the following settings in your browser. If you change computers or start to use a different browser, be sure to check these settings again:

Browser Version
Typhon Group recommends that you use the latest version of your browser and the most current version of your operating system. This ensures the highest level of encryption between your computer and our servers.

Cache Settings
These are the most important settings to check, as they affect whether you are seeing the most current version of each page. If not set properly, your Typhon Group session may expire prematurely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Internet Explorer:</strong> Under Tools/Internet Options/General/Browsing History-Settings...select &quot;Every time I visit the webpage&quot; and press OK. Then, under Browsing History, click on &quot;Delete...&quot; and check the box next to &quot;Temporary Internet Files&quot; and click &quot;Delete&quot; to permanently clear the cache. Press &quot;OK&quot; when done. Restart web browser.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Firefox:</strong> Under Tools/Options/Advanced-Network tab...in &quot;Cached Web Content&quot; check &quot;Override automatic cache management&quot; and limit cache to &quot;0&quot; MB of space. Press the &quot;Clear Now&quot; button on the right, then press OK. Restart web browser.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Assignments**

Assignments submitted either in hard copy or via E-mail must be received by the date and time due. Assignments received after that time will be considered late and the grade will be lowered by one full grade for each day it is late. Any student may request confirmation of receipt of E-mailed assignments.

Each student is expected to use proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling in all written assignments. Assignments are to be typed and double spaced unless otherwise indicated by the course instructor.


**Exams**

Each student is expected to attend class to sit for all scheduled exams and quizzes as outlined in the course syllabus. If a student is unable to take an exam or quiz, he/she must notify the
instructor prior to the exam or quiz and request permission from the instructor to reschedule and
this decision is made at the discretion of the course instructor. If the student fails to do this,
he/she will receive a failing grade on the exam or quiz. If a student misses an exam or quiz,
he/she must present official documentation, for example a Doctor’s note or a Police Report,
before being allowed to take a makeup exam or quiz. Any student who does not pass an exam
or quiz is responsible for scheduling an appointment with the course instructor to discuss and
review the exam.

Assessment Methods
The objectives for each course in the OTA curriculum reflect the 2011 OTA content standards
required by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education. A complete listing
of these content standards (section B) can be retrieved from
https://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Accredit/Standards/2011-
Standards-and-Interpretive-Guide.pdf
The program assesses each student’s knowledge and skill in the areas below through specific
content standards in each category:

- Foundational Content
- Basic Tenets of Occupational Therapy
- Occupational Therapy Theoretical Perspectives
- Screening and Evaluation
- Intervention and Implementation
- Context of Service Delivery
- Assistance with the Management of Occupational Therapy Services
- Scholarship
- Professional ethics, values, and responsibilities

Assessment measures for each content standard are described within each course syllabus and
include assignments, demonstrations, projects and presentations, objective and/or essay
exams, and laboratory exams, and are chosen based upon course material. Students are
assessed on these content standards in the academic and fieldwork settings (Level I Fieldwork
A, B, C and Level II Fieldwork).
Each student receives ongoing feedback and a final evaluation of performance as part of every
Level I and Level II Fieldwork experience. The specifics of these assessment measures can be
found on the corresponding course syllabus.
Student Evaluation and Academic Standing

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program has established policies and guidelines in accordance with the School of Health Professions (SHP) regarding academic standing including the minimum grade point average (GPA) students must maintain each semester, repetition of courses, and procedures for academic probation for students who fail to maintain the required GPA. To view all SHP Academic Policies go to http://apps.shrp.rutgers.edu/projects/shrpweb-cf/policies/index_new.cfm.

Each student must demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and skill in academic work and fieldwork education in order to progress forward and complete the program of study. The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Faculty regularly evaluate each student’s acquisition of knowledge, skills, professional behaviors, and competencies needed for graduation and entry-level practice as an occupational therapy assistant. Students are evaluated at the completion of each Level I and Level II Fieldwork by the Fieldwork Educator and the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. Students are awarded a letter grade for each academic course and a grade of Pass or Fail for each fieldwork course. In determining a grade, each instructor utilizes criteria established discussed with students at the beginning of each course.

Students must earn final grade of “C” (73%) or better in each course, and must maintain a cumulative grade point average at or above 2.3 (4.0 scale) during each semester to progress in the professional curriculum and to graduate. To receive a ‘C’, students must complete all specified course requirements in a satisfactory manner. Based on the course evaluations methods and criteria previously described, each requirement is scored on a 0-100 point scale. The final letter grade is based on the weighted average of all requirements.

The following grades are used to report the quality of academic and/or clinical performance when SHP is the transcript-issuing institute. In the event that an SHP program is affiliated with another institution, and the affiliate institution is the transcript issuing institution, academic or clinical performance may be graded according to the affiliate institution's grading system.

Grade Scale (updated Fall 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Undergraduate Scale</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93.0-100</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90.0-92.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87.0-89.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Percentage Range</td>
<td>Credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83.0-86.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80.0-82.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.0-79.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73.0-76.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70.0-72.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67.0-69.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63.0-66.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;63</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P  Passing (Pass/Fail Course Only)
I  Incomplete
IP  Course In Progress
AU  Audit
NG  Non-graded (grade not submitted or cannot be determined at this time)
W  Official withdrawal
WF  Unofficial withdrawal
WI  Official Withdrawal from Program with Incomplete Courses

All academic coursework must be completed before the start of Level II fieldwork education with the exception of OCTH 2072- Professional Seminar II which is concurrent.

Grade of Incomplete

I-Incomplete

A grade of “I” is given only when circumstances such as student illness, injury, family crisis, or an unavoidable absence from class such as military service, prevent completion of course requirements. A request for an Incomplete must come from the student, and the student must confer with the course instructor prior to the course grade being issued. The instructor retains the right to award the “I” but may do so only when the following criterion has been met:

- The Withdrawal period is over. If the course extends over two semesters, the Incomplete may be given following the withdrawal period for the second semester.
- The student’s performance is satisfactory, with a grade of C (73%) or better. Under no circumstances will an Incomplete be given as a substitute for a failing grade.
Students must request the Incomplete by filling out Part A of the “Request for an Incomplete Grade Form”. Section B will be completed by the instructor who will outline the exact work required to replace the “I” with a performance grade along with the due date. The incomplete must be converted to a performance grade before the end of the next semester in which the “I” was received, or sooner, at the discretion of the Instructor. However, the length of time should be based on whether the work missed requires interaction with other students, necessitating that the student wait for the next course offering, or complete the missing work independently. The Instructor will determine the due date for course completion, and if the student does not meet this deadline, the “I” will revert to a Failure. If the student needs to return to the class at its next offering, the student will pick up where he/she left off, and all previously earned grades will be used to determine the final course grade. Under extreme circumstances, the incomplete period may be extended, but only with permission of the Assistant Dean for Enrollment Management in conjunction with the Program Director. To request an extension, the student must write a letter explaining why the extension is needed and provide requested supporting documentation.

A student may not carry more than two Incompletes at one time. A student must complete at least one Incomplete before the student is allowed to register for courses and progress in their program. An administrative hold preventing registration is placed on the student record and will only be removed when a performance grade is issued. An Incomplete grade affects a student’s satisfactory academic progress. Refer to Policy 3.1.2 Student Satisfactory Academic Progress. A student, who is working on an incomplete but not registered for another course, must submit a “Maintaining Matriculation Form”.

The OTA curriculum requires the completion of coursework in a specific manner with identified prerequisite and co requisite courses. In order to serve as a prerequisite, a course must be completed with a grade assigned in order to enroll in the following course and continue the OTA curriculum.

**IP - In Progress**

The provisional grade of “IP” (in progress) is assigned to courses that extend more than one semester, for example in the case of a clinical affiliation when the start date has been delayed or when a student needs more time at a site either for remediation or because of other circumstances.
**W- Official Withdrawal from course**

Students who officially withdraw from a course during the withdrawal period will receive a grade of “W” on their transcript. (See Withdrawal from Course Policy # 2.0.3). If the withdrawal occurs after the Add/Drop period, the student would incur a financial loss in accordance with the refund schedule.  [http://shrp.rutgers.edu/current_students/registrar/regist_02_reg_dates.html](http://shrp.rutgers.edu/current_students/registrar/regist_02_reg_dates.html)

If a student withdraws after the withdrawal period, the course instructor will assign a final grade based upon the work completed and the requirements for the course.

**Repeating Courses**

A student may repeat any ONE course if the grade received does not meet the "C" (73%) requirement as established by the program. In instances where a student has repeated a course, the original and subsequent grades will appear on the student's transcripts. However, only the last grade earned is calculated into the student’s cumulative GPA. Students who fail one course twice, or any two courses, will be dismissed from the program.

One of the requirements for graduation from the OTA Program is the attainment of a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.3. Students must also maintain a GPA of 2.3 each semester during their studies in the Program. The OTA Program Director monitors each student’s GPA and progression in the program at the end of each academic semester.

The Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Profession's Committee on Admissions and Academic Standing and Progress (CAASP) reviews performance of all students on a regular basis, that is, at the end of every semester, as well as whenever needed due to student difficulties, either academically, in relation to Essential Function, or to other matters of concern regarding professional development. The Committee may interview the student as part of this review. Students not meeting the Program’s standards are informed in writing of CAASP decisions, actions, and recommendations for remediation. CAASP actions may include placing a student on academic probation or semester probation, dismissal of the student from the program, or other action the Committee deems appropriate. Students who wish to request a review of any CAASP decision or action may start this review by contacting the Department Chair. The Committee generally, as part of its decisions, recommends the student meet with the advisor to discuss options. Such options may include, but are not limited to, identifying a remedial plan of action, applying for a leave of absence, transferring to another program of study, or voluntarily leaving the program.
**Academic Probation**

In any semester in which a student’s cumulative GPA is below the required 2.3 level, either for the semester or overall in the program, the student is notified in writing of being placed on probation status. For students not meeting the GPA standard overall, the student is placed on Academic Probation, and the Committee may recommend any appropriate remedial action including dismissal from the program of students who have not shown improvement in meeting this standard.

**Semester Probation**

In any semester in which a student’s semester GPA is below the required level 2.3 level for that semester, the student is notified in writing of semester probation status. The CAASP in addition to reviewing student performance may interview the student about performance issues. The Committee may recommend any appropriate remedial action. Students are notified in writing of any CAASP decisions, actions or recommendations. Students who do not maintain the required GPA for two consecutive semesters and have not demonstrated progress in improving the GPA over that time will be considered for dismissal from the program.

**Remediation**

Students experiencing academic difficulty in a course must make an appointment to meet with the course instructor to discuss the reasons for this and to make plans to address the difficulty. Students may find it useful to meet with their advisor to discuss the difficulty and possible courses of action. Students may access academic counseling and tutorial services through the Office of Student Services accessible at (973) 972-7939 or at

[http://shp.rutgers.edu/current_students/shrp_oss_home.html](http://shp.rutgers.edu/current_students/shrp_oss_home.html)

**Course Evaluations**

The efficacy and quality of all OTA courses are assessed regularly. Each student is invited to provide constructive feedback to the course instructor at any time. Formal course evaluations are completed at final using the course evaluation form in accordance with the policies of the Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Professions. It is important to the program and the faculty that each student completes the course evaluations honestly and respectfully. These evaluations are kept confidential. After completion of the program, each student is asked to review and provide feedback on the entire OTA curriculum.
Student Records
Each student has a file of records that are secured within the OTA Program Director’s office. Student records are kept by the OTA program for five years following graduation and are permanently maintained by Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.
The student file includes:
- Admission Data and Transcripts (copy- original with Registrar)
- Ongoing grades and transcripts
- Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (Level I and II)
- Records of student- faculty communication including fieldwork educators
- Counseling forms and educational agreements
- CPR documentation

Student information is entered and stored on the Typhon System which is accessible to all students for editing of their personal information.

Progression in the OTA Program
The SHRP OTA Program (professional phase) requires that coursework be completed in a step-wise fashion so that prerequisite material is mastered before moving on to more advanced content and to ensure the integrity of the curriculum is maintained. Each student entering the full-time program begins classes in the fall and the successful student is eligible to graduate 15-19 months later. Each student entering the part-time program begins classes in the winter/spring and the successful student is eligible to graduate 24- 28 months later. The maximum allowable time to complete the OTA Program is 36 months for the full-time track (three years) and 48 months for the part-time track (four years).

Each student in the OTA program must earn final grade of “C” or better in every course, and must maintain a cumulative Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) at or above 2.3 (4.0 scale) to progress and to graduate from the program.
Competencies must be successfully demonstrated each semester according to the criteria provided within each course.

A student may repeat any one academic OTA course in which a failing grade was earned (<73%). The student is considered to be on academic probation until the course is passed with a grade of C as described. In order to serve as a prerequisite, a course must be completed
with a passing grade assigned. Two academic course failures will result in dismissal from the OTA program.

The cumulative grade point average is calculated each semester and discussed as part of academic advisement. A student who has a cumulative average G.P.A. of less than 2.3 is placed on academic probation and an educational plan is developed in consultation with the student’s academic advisor.

Students whose work is incomplete at the end of the semester may be assigned an “I”/Incomplete at the discretion of the course instructor. A grade of "I" is given when circumstances beyond the control of the student prevent completion of course requirements. A request for an Incomplete must come from the student, and the student must confer with the course instructor prior to the final week of the course. A student who receives an Incomplete is responsible for understanding and completing the work required to remove the ‘I’ grade [this is formalized by written contract that is signed by the student, instructor and program director]. The student must complete the remaining requirements and earn a performance grade within one year of the semester in which the "I" is received, and this will slow down the student’s progression through the OTA curriculum. If a grade is not earned and assigned during this time frame, the "I" is automatically converted to an "F." In order to serve as a prerequisite, a course must be completed with a passing grade assigned.

Progression through the OTA Program requires successful completion of both academic and fieldwork education. In addition, each student must demonstrate continual compliance with the OTA program’s Essential Functions (p. 36) and the SHRP Faculty/Student Honor Code.

All academic coursework except OCTH 2072- Professional Seminar II (co-requisite) must be completed with an earned cumulative grade point average of 2.3(on a 4.0 scale) or above prior to beginning Level II Fieldwork.

Each student must achieve a Passing Score on the AOTA Level II Fieldwork Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Student for each of the two Level II Fieldwork experiences.

A student may repeat one failed Level II Fieldwork experience one time only. Two failures on Fieldwork II result in dismissal from the program. All Level II Fieldwork Education is scheduled to begin immediately upon completion of the academic coursework and must be completed
within 12 months of completion of academic coursework. Any change in the time frame for beginning Level II Fieldwork is made only with the permission of the Program Director and only when such arrangements can be made by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.

Please also refer to policies in the SHP Student Handbook regarding withdrawal and continuing program status.

Requirements for Graduation

An Associate of Science Degree is awarded to each student who successfully completes the required 74-credits of academic coursework and fieldwork education. The diploma is awarded jointly by Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and an OTA Partner College.

In accordance with the SHP Policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress, each student enrolled in the full-time program must complete all requirements for graduation, including Level II fieldwork education within 36 months of entering the program. Each student enrolled in the part-time program must complete all requirements for graduation within 48 months of entering the program including Level II fieldwork education. Each student enrolled in the full or part-time program must complete all Level II fieldwork education within 12 months of completing academic coursework.

Graduation from the program indicates the graduate has the knowledge and skills required for entry-level practice as an Occupational Therapy Assistant under the direct supervision of an Occupational Therapist.

Requirements for Graduation from the OTA Program include the following:

1. Each course must be completed with a grade of C (73%) or better and a cumulative Grade Point Average of 2.3 (on a 4.0 scale) must be maintained every semester.
2. Integrated competencies must be successfully passed each semester according to the criteria provided within each course.
3. Each student must have demonstrated continual compliance with the OTA Program’s Essential Standards and the SHRP Faculty/Student Honor Code.
4. Level II Fieldwork (OCTH 2019, OCTH 2029) must be completed with a passing grade in accordance with the AOTA Level II Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Student.
5. Each student must Complete all Graduation Requirements as specified in the SHP Student Handbook.
The graduate of an accredited OTA Program is eligible to sit for the Certification Examination for the Occupational Therapy Assistant administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). NBCOT publishes on line resources for exam preparation and competency assessment, available at http://www.nbcot.org.

After successful completion of the exam, the program graduate is recognized as a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant and is eligible to apply for licensure in many states including New Jersey.

A felony conviction may impact a graduate’s ability to sit for the NBCOT examination and attain State Licensure. A criminal background check is consequently required prior to enrollment in the program.

Fieldwork Education
Fieldwork education directly engages students with occupational therapy practice in real world contexts. Fieldwork sites are selected that align with the profession and program’s philosophy, and the program’s curriculum design. The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework - III (2014) is used across fieldwork settings as an organizing structure focusing students on occupational performance and participation. Students are made aware of psychological and social factors that influence engagement in occupation as they interact with clients in every fieldwork practice setting.

Fieldwork education is integrated into the total curriculum through the semester structure. The program emphasizes safe and ethical practice, the development of supervisory behaviors, and a firm understanding of the scope of practice of the OTA.

Fieldwork education supports the process of becoming an OT professional through the mentorship provided by fieldwork educators. Fieldwork educators are encouraged to help OTA students build upon their previous life experience and related strength, skills and capabilities.

The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator ensures that each student's fieldwork portfolio documents experience working with individuals across the lifespan, and reflects opportunities in diverse practice settings. OTA students complete three Level I fieldwork experiences concurrent with academic coursework, and two Level II fieldwork experiences after all academic coursework has been successfully completed.
Student Assignment to Fieldwork Site

Each student is assigned to a fieldwork site for each Level I and Level II experience by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator considering the curriculum sequence and student learning needs. A Memorandum of Understanding between Rutgers SHP and the clinical facility must be in place before a student can complete fieldwork at the facility. The fieldwork sites are located primarily in New Jersey. Arrangements for Level II fieldwork placements in other states can be made as requested by students in accordance with State Authorization* (see below). Each student must arrange transportation to fieldwork and can expect a driving distance of up to one hour and one half hour from his or her residence to each fieldwork site.

The planning process for fieldwork education begins when the student is accepted into the OTA Program. The educational need of each student is the primary concern of the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. Each student meets with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator periodically so that needs and learning styles can be considered in planning Level I and Level II fieldwork education placements.

Students are not permitted to contact Fieldwork Educators to arrange their own fieldwork placements. A student who is interested in a particular facility or geographic area should discuss this with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator during a fieldwork advisement meeting. One or more students from the OTA Program may be assigned to a site for the same fieldwork time period. Students from other Colleges or universities may also be completing clinical education at the site including those from occupational therapy and other health professions.

*Distance Learning/State Authorizations
The School of Health Professions at Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences offers online and distance learning opportunities, as well as clinical experiences, for students across the country, with an emphasis on Allied Health. SHP has designed and implemented online undergraduate and graduate programs that parallel the classroom experience, providing academic and financial provisions that allow participants to feel supported and prepared for what is next. Recently, State Authorization regulations have impacted SHRP’s ability to offer admission to fully-qualified candidates for our programs due to each state’s regulations. To review the current status of authorization for distance learning or clinical placement in your state prior to application, please visit http://shp.rutgers.edu/state_authorization/.
Fieldwork Educators
The OTA Program appreciates the commitment made by the Fieldwork Educators to the occupational therapy assistant students. The Program periodically offers workshops to Fieldwork Educators on the Scotch Plains campus and/or at the fieldwork site. Fieldwork Educators are encouraged to improve their educational and supervisory skills through resources provided by the American Occupational Therapy Association, the Metropolitan OT Association (MOTEC), The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, and by consulting the resource list in this manual. Fieldwork Educators are licensed occupational therapy professionals who have made a special commitment to educating future occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants. The American Occupational Therapy Association has a voluntary Fieldwork Educator Certificate Program that many fieldwork educators have taken. Other fieldwork educators have been trained through other College or continuing education courses and through experience. ACOTE requires that an occupational therapy professional has at least one year of experience prior to supervising a student.

Personal Data Sheet
The Personal Data Sheet (Typhon document) is completed by the student and updated each semester to provide background and contact information, and information about the student’s perceived learning style. The data sheet is sent to the clinical site in advance of the fieldwork experience to assist the Fieldwork Educator in planning the educational experience.

Liability Insurance
Rutgers SHP provides for general and professional liability coverage of each student completing fieldwork.

A student who wishes to participate in out-of-state clinical rotations as a part of the educational experience may be required to purchase liability insurance covering such activities and obtain a certificate of such insurance, naming Rutgers School of Health Related Professions and the clinical facility as certificate holders, prior to beginning the fieldwork. Students may purchase insurance for this purpose at: http://www.hpsocomstudents/studentindex.php3 or any comparable source of their choosing.

Interviews
An interview is required prior to each Level II fieldwork experience and may be required by some
sites for Level I fieldwork. The student must arrange the interview with the Fieldwork Educator at least two months before the Level II placement.

The student should prepare for the interview by reviewing information about the fieldwork site and the student program. The student should assemble a portfolio representing achievements in the academic program and previous fieldwork. The interview provides the student with an opportunity to obtain additional information about the site and the fieldwork requirements. Some fieldwork sites interview several students for a placement and choose the student they deem most qualified. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator will advise each student of this competitive interview situation prior to the interview. The fieldwork site may accept or decline a student for fieldwork education (Level I and/or Level II). When a student is not accepted at such a site, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator will place the student at an alternate site.

When the Fieldwork Educator feels that the student may have difficulty meeting the essential requirements of an OTA student at a particular fieldwork site, the Fieldwork Educator may decline to offer the placement to the student. The Fieldwork Educator is asked to provide the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and the student with the specific concerns. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator discusses this information/feedback with the student and the two may develop a remediation plan to address areas of concern. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator places the student at an alternate site at the scheduled time or following completion of the remediation plan.

Should the student have a concern following a fieldwork interview, he/she should contact the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator to discuss this situation and prepare to provide specific information about his or her concerns. The decision to place a student at an alternate site based upon the student’s dissatisfaction with an interview rests with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and may delay the placement.

**Cancellations**

There are times when a fieldwork reservation is cancelled by the site. When a fieldwork cancellation occurs, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator reassigns the student(s) in a timely manner.
Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance at all fieldwork education sessions is mandatory. An absence of more than one day requires a doctor’s note.

Each student is expected to arrive on time and remain for the entire day at fieldwork. Tardiness is not accepted and has consequences that can include dismissal from the fieldwork site. Leaving a fieldwork site early to attend to personal business is not permitted. Taking unexcused or lengthy breaks is not acceptable.

If a student must be absent or late due to illness or an emergency, the following procedure must be followed:

If an absence is anticipated, the student must report this in advance to the Fieldwork Educator and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator so that arrangements for make-up can be made. If an absence is sudden, the student must inform the Fieldwork Educator by calling the site 15-30 minutes before the scheduled start of the day. If a message is left, the student must call again later to ensure the message was received. Text messaging is not permitted. The student must notify the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator of the day missed and the scheduled makeup date.

Health Information

Each incoming student is required to complete the immunizations and other health requirements prior to the first day of classes. This information is mailed to all accepted students and must be submitted prior to registering for classes. Each student should retain a copy of all health documentation for his or her personal files. Please refer to [http://njms.rutgers.edu/departments/family_medicine/shs/immun_shrp.cfm](http://njms.rutgers.edu/departments/family_medicine/shs/immun_shrp.cfm) category one for specific requirements. The Student Health and Wellness Center can be reached by calling (973) 972-8219.

Fieldwork sites typically require students to provide specific health documentation prior to beginning a fieldwork placement. Some sites may require additional health documentation, for example, the results of drug testing or an updated physical examination.

Each student is assigned to a fieldwork sites at least six weeks prior to the start date. The student must contact the Fieldwork Educator to obtain information about the specific health documentation required.

It is the responsibility of each student to provide the assigned fieldwork site with required health information in accordance with the site’s requested time frame. Students should retain a copy of all health documentation for their personal files.
Drug Testing

Students who need drug testing as requirement at a fieldwork site may go through SHP for this service with approval of the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.

Professional Behavior

Fieldwork education is a vital part of the OTA curriculum. The Fieldwork Educators offer their expertise to each student in the program and are not compensated for this service to the profession. All students should demonstrate appreciation by being respectful, courteous, and actively involved in the educational experience. Each student should expect to be treated by the fieldwork educator and co-workers with dignity and respect.

Each student is a representative of the University, School, Program, and the OT Profession and must behave in a professional, ethical, dignified and respectful manner at the fieldwork site and in accordance with the American Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics (AOTA, 2015).

Professionalism includes extending respect to all clients, co-workers and fieldwork educators. Proper attire, timeliness and attendance are included in the category of professional behavior. The use of sound judgment in all clinical situations is part of professionalism as is the use of discretion and diplomacy. Each student must at all times show respect for the fieldwork site’s equipment and supplies. Each student must handle personal and professional problems without interference with the performance of their fieldwork site duties. The use of cell phones, smart phones, or text messaging is not permitted during fieldwork. These devices should be stored and out of site and used only on the lunch hour or during breaks in a location deemed appropriate by the site. Any student who behaves in a manner that is not professional, respectful or courteous shall expect to fail fieldwork regardless of performance in other skill areas.

Accommodation for a Disability on Fieldwork

Please review previous section in this manual and the SHP Student Handbook regarding Services for Students with Disabilities

Each fieldwork site has Essential Functions for Performance of an occupational therapy assistant student. Disclosure of a disability to the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and the Fieldwork Educator is strongly encouraged and is the responsibility of the student. When a student discloses a disability to both educators as described, the Academic Fieldwork
Coordinator is able to collaborate with The Office of Student Services when planning fieldwork, and with the Fieldwork Educator and the student to determine the need for any reasonable accommodation in meeting the essential functions of an occupational therapy assistant student at the fieldwork site. Regardless of accommodation, each student must meet the essential functions of the site and receive a passing grade on the fieldwork evaluation.

**Privacy of Client Health Information**

Students must adhere consistently to the Health Insurance Privacy and Portability Act (HIPAA). General guidelines for confidentiality of client information are outlined below; however each fieldwork site must inform students about specific policies enforced at the facility:

- Discuss client information only with other professionals who “need to know”
- Avoid discussions in elevator, cafeteria, or any public areas
- Do not look at any client information unless YOU “Need to Know”
- Client interview: whatever a client discloses to you is confidential although you are expected to share this information with your Fieldwork Educator. Choose location for interview carefully. When possible, close doors or speak softly in semi-private rooms to ensure that no one overhears private information.
- Do not leave medical record information out, open, or in any way visible
- Do not take any part of medical record home
- Shred all sensitive paper data as advised by your Fieldwork Educator.
- Position computer screen so others cannot read confidential information
- Make sure you log off computer after completing electronic documentation
- Never share your pass code to anyone
- Do not fax any part of the medical record
- Do not leave voice mail message regarding client condition
- Direct any visitors inquiring about patient information to the information desk
- Remind others to follow confidentiality policy
Health and Safety on Fieldwork

I. Inclement Weather
Announcements regarding inclement weather emergencies are made on the Rutgers SHRP website. On assigned fieldwork days each student should follow the inclement weather procedure established at the fieldwork site, and should use his or her judgment concerning safe travel to fieldwork when weather conditions are inclement. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the fieldwork supervisor concerning inclement weather and to arrange to make up missed work.

Fieldwork educators are requested to notify students and the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator in the event that their site is unexpectedly closed.

II. Professional Dress Code
Each student must abide by the following guidelines for the professional dress code that is required when participating in fieldwork education. The fieldwork site may request that a student wear a specific uniform, and/or alter dress code in compliance with site requirements. Each student must check with the fieldwork educator regarding the dress code prior to the first day of fieldwork.

A. The Rutgers ID Badge must be worn at all times
B. Attire must be neat and the student must be well groomed including hair and nails. Long fingernails are not permitted.
C. Comfortable, stable shoes must be worn with non-slip soles. Open toe shoes are not permitted.
D. Clothing that will allow modesty and ease of movement when working with clients must be worn.
E. Perfumes or after shave lotions must be avoided.
F. Long dangling earrings and excessive jewelry must not be worn.
G. A watch with a second hand must be worn
III. Safety

Safety for the clients, other staff, and for students is of utmost importance. Each student is expected to adhere consistently to safety regulations, policies and procedures at the assigned fieldwork site. To decrease vulnerability and reduce the possibility of an incident, each student must take responsibility for learning about the fieldwork site’s environment and become aware of potential risks. Fieldwork Educators must provide information about safety procedures, emergencies, fire, and patient incidents. Each student must review and follow the fieldwork site’s policies and procedures. If there is cause for concern for the safety of the client, the fieldwork experience is terminated immediately and the student receives a failing grade for the class.

The supervisor must provide the OTA student with guidelines (or the student must ask) regarding performing range of motion or therapeutic exercises, neuromuscular education, transfers and other mobility activities and interventions with each client. It is suggested that each student is ‘cleared’ for each activity with each client after going through a process such as this:

- Fieldwork educator demonstrates the technique and discusses specific precautions for the client with the OTA student
- Fieldwork educator and OTA student perform the technique together
- Fieldwork educator observes the OTA student performing the technique several times in different environments under close supervision
- Fieldwork educator gradually reduces the proximity of supervision and clearly communicates with the OTA student regarding the client, the technique or activity, and the level of supervision he or she must have to perform this with the client

When the student is unsure of these procedures he or she must consult with the Fieldwork Educator to clarify expectations and procedures.

A. Client Precautions and Contraindications

Each student must pay careful attention to client/patient precautions (e.g. weight bearing, motion restrictions, cardiac condition, swallowing, behavioral). If a student is unsure about precautions or the correct technique to follow, these concerns must always be clarified with the Fieldwork Educator prior to the treatment session.
B. Physical Handling of the Client

Each student must be certain he or she is aware of and able to follow the procedures, precautions, and contraindications for physical handling of each client (e.g. monitoring vital signs, assisting with mobility - bed, gait, transfers, ADL's and therapeutic exercise).

C. Body Mechanics

The use of proper body mechanics helps ensure the safety of the student and the client. Students learn about body mechanics during their first academic semester and this is reinforced throughout the curriculum. Each student must be given specific feedback about his or her application of proper body mechanics in the clinical situation.

D. Infection Control

Infection control is of critical importance. The Fieldwork Educator should review the site’s policies on Infection Control including Standard Precautions with all students. Standard Precautions must be strictly adhered to at all times. Students learn about Standard Precautions during their first academic semester and this is reinforced throughout the curriculum. Thorough hand washing is imperative before and after working with any individual. Hand washing is also necessary at the beginning and end of the workday, and after personal grooming and toileting.

IV. Student Medical Emergencies during Fieldwork

The fieldwork site will typically provide for or arrange emergency care for a student who has a medical emergency or accident during the fieldwork day. The student must use personal health insurance for these situations. The Fieldwork Educator and/or student must notify the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator in any case of a medical emergency or accident that involves a fieldwork student.

Incident Reports

If an accident occurs at a fieldwork site, the incident must be reported using the facility’s incident report form, and a copy must be submitted to the Office of Risk and Claims Management, ADMC 1313, Newark campus, with a copy to the Office of the SHRP Dean, and OTA Program Director. The Office of Risk and Claims Management should be contacted immediately if the accident involves injury, at (973) 972-6277. The Occupational Therapy Program Director should be contacted at (908) 889-2474.
Site Visits

Site visits are made by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and/or other OTA faculty while students are participating in fieldwork education in order to:

- Support the student’s transition from the classroom to practice, and to monitor and support the student’s performance
- Intervene when performance, professional, or supervisory issues arise.
- Monitor the objectives and assignments associated with Level I and Level II fieldwork.
- Monitor that each fieldwork is carried out in a way that is consistent with the Rutgers OTA curriculum including:
  - promotes clinical reasoning appropriate to the occupational therapy assistant role
  - transmits the values and beliefs that enable ethical practice
  - helps the student develop professionalism and competence
- Ensure that OTA students are supervised in a manner that provides protection of consumers and opportunities for role modeling of OT practice.
- Collaborate with and support the Fieldwork Educator in the role of supervisor, mentor, and educator

Level I Fieldwork

The goal of Level I fieldwork is to introduce students to the fieldwork experience, to apply knowledge to practice and to develop understanding of the needs of the clients. Level I fieldwork is integral to this program’s curriculum design and includes experiences designed to enrich didactic coursework through directed observation and participation in selected aspects of the occupational therapy process. (ACOTE Standards, 2011)

Level I fieldwork: Integration and Practice Applications: A, B, and C are discrete courses that are completed during the academic portion of the professional curriculum. The collective faculty contributes to the design of semester fieldwork objectives and assignments, and each course integrates field experiences with course content. OTA students are required to demonstrate selected competencies in the classroom setting that are reinforced and further evaluated in the fieldwork setting. Each Level I fieldwork course includes a pre and post fieldwork seminar for professional skill development and competency assessment. At the completion of each academic semester, students are required to demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills
honored during the semester’s combined academic and fieldwork education.

The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator collaborates with each Fieldwork Educator in order to adjust learning objectives and assignments to fit with the practice setting and the curriculum design. All final materials including: the course syllabus, learning objectives, assignments, and the Level I Fieldwork Performance Evaluation are given to each student and sent to the fieldwork site in advance of the student’s arrival.

During Level I Fieldwork, students are scheduled to attend fieldwork sites on Thursdays (six visits total) according to the dates established by the course instructor which always follows the Rutgers SHRP/OTA calendar; however, flexibility does allow for fieldwork to occur on Mondays, Fridays and Saturdays.

**Level I Fieldwork-A: Integration and Practice Applications**

OCTH 1019 (1 credit)
Semester One – eight visits (Full Time Student)
Semester Three – eight visits (Part Time Student)

Learning Objectives
1. Upon completion of the Level I-A Fieldwork, each student will be able to demonstrate the following objectives as per ACOTE standards (2011):
2. Describe the meaning and dynamics of occupation and activity, including the interaction of areas of occupation, performance skills, performance patterns, activity demands, context(s), and client factors. (B.2.1)
3. Articulate the importance of balancing areas of occupation with the achievement of health and wellness. (B.2.4)
4. Understand the effects of heritable diseases, genetic conditions, disability, trauma, and injury to the physical and mental health and occupational performance of the individual. (B.2.6)
5. Demonstrate task analysis in areas of occupation, performance skills, performance patterns, activity demands, context(s) and environments, and client factors to implement the intervention plan. (B.2.7)
6. Use sound judgment in regard to safety of self and others, and adhere to safety regulations throughout the occupational therapy process as appropriate to the setting and scope of practice. (B.2.8)
7. Gather and share data for the purpose of screening and evaluation using methods including but not limited to, specified screening tools, assessments, skilled observations, occupational histories, consultations with other professionals, and interviews with the client, family, and significant others. (B.4.1)

8. Demonstrate therapeutic use of self, including one's personality, insights, perceptions, and judgments as part of the therapeutic process in both individual and group interaction. (5.7)

9. Effectively interact through written, oral, and nonverbal communication with client, family, significant others, colleagues, other health providers, and the public in a professionally acceptable manner. (B.5.20)

10. Describe the contexts of health care, education, community, and social systems as they relate to the practice of occupational therapy. (B.6.1)

Level I Fieldwork-B: Integration and Practice Applications
OCTH 1029 (1 credit)
Semester Two – eight visits (Full Time Student)
Semester Four – eight visits (Part Time Student)

Learning Objectives
1. Upon completion of the Level I-B Fieldwork, each student will be able to demonstrate the following objectives as per ACOTE standards (2011):

2. Explain the role of occupation in the promotion of health and the prevention of disease and disability for the individual, family, and society. (B.2.5)

3. Identify interventions consistent with models of occupational performance. (B.2.11)

4. Gather and share data for the purpose of evaluating the client’s occupational performance in activities of daily living (ADLs, instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), education, work, play, rest, sleep, leisure, and social participation. (B.4.4)

5. Articulate the role of the occupational therapy assistant and occupational therapist in the screening and evaluation process along with the importance of and rationale for supervision and collaborative work between the occupational therapy assistant and occupational therapist in that process. (B.4.5)

6. Provide therapeutic use of occupation, exercises, and activities. (B.5.3)

7. Provide training in self-care, self-management, health management and maintenance, home management, and community and work integration. (B.5.5)
8. Provide training in techniques to enhance functional mobility, including physical transfers, wheelchair management, and mobility devices. (B.5.12)

9. (Dependent on setting)

10. Use the teaching-learning process with the client, family, significant others to facilitate skills in areas of occupation as well as prevention, health maintenance, health promotion, and safety. (B.5.18)

11. Grade and adapt the environment, tools, materials, occupations and interventions to reflect the changing needs of the client and the sociocultural context. (B.5.23)

12. Document occupational therapy services to ensure accountability of service provision and to meet standards for reimbursement of services. (B.5.32)

**Level I Fieldwork C: Integration and Practice Applications**

OCTH 1039 (1 credit)

Semester Three – eight visits (Full Time Student)

Semester Five – eight visits (Part Time Student)

**Learning Objectives**

1. Identify interventions consistent with models of occupational performance. (B.2.11)

2. Administer selected assessments using appropriate procedures and protocols and use occupation for the purpose of assessment. (B.4.2)

3. Select and provide direct occupational therapy interventions and procedures to enhance safety, health and wellness, and performance in ADL’s, IADL’s, education, play, rest, sleep, leisure, and social participation. (B.5.2)

4. Implement group interventions based on principles of group development and group dynamics with children and youth. (B.5.4)

5. Provide development, remediation, and compensation for physical, mental, cognitive, perceptual, neuromuscular, behavioral skills and sensory functions. (B.5.6)

6. Demonstrate therapeutic use of self as part of the therapeutic process within individual and group interactions with children and youth. (5.7)

7. Use professional literature to make evidence-based practice decisions in collaboration with the occupational therapist. (8.3)
Level II Fieldwork

OTA Practice: Fieldwork II, Adult/Older Adult
OCTH 2019
OTA Practice: Fieldwork II, Children/Youth
OCTH 2029
Semester Four (Full Time Students)
Semester Six (Part Time Students)

The goal of Level II Fieldwork is to develop competent, entry-level, generalist occupational therapy assistants. Level II fieldwork must be integral to the program’s curriculum design and must include an in-depth experience in delivering occupational therapy services to clients, focusing on the application of purposeful and meaningful occupation. (ACOTE, 2011)

Each of the two Level II Fieldwork opportunities in the OTA Program is an in-depth, eight-week experience that requires students to demonstrate entry-level competence in delivering OT services under the direct supervision of an OT or an OTA under the supervision of an OT.

The concurrent Professional Seminar II (OCTH 2072) supports the transition to Level II fieldwork with selected topics encouraging reflection on professional development, supervision, productivity, and regulations particular to practice settings. Students are exposed to a variety of clients across the life span and to diverse practice settings.

The SHP OTA Program permits students one day absence from Level II fieldwork due to illness or personal emergency. In cases where time must be made up, a grade of “incomplete” will be given for the Level II Fieldwork. All time must be made up within two weeks of the scheduled end of the experience with the exception of any days that are first approved and excused by the fieldwork site according to site specific policy.

The Supervisory Relationship and Process

The relationship between the Student and the Fieldwork Educator is collaborative and frequent communication is essential. The Fieldwork Educator spends time at the start of the fieldwork experience to discuss supervisory and learning styles. A method for daily communication and time for formal weekly supervision is established by the Fieldwork Educator in consultation with the student.
The Fieldwork Educator defines and discusses standards for performance, expectations, and learning objectives at the start of the fieldwork experience. These standards of performance are based on the course objectives and facility criteria (for Level I Fieldwork). The Fieldwork Educator establishes standards of performance for Level II Fieldwork by analyzing each item on the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the OTA Student and developing specific objectives for the facility.

The Fieldwork Educator uses various methods of instruction, some of which include student observation, co-treatment with the Fieldwork Educator, formal presentations, questioning, written assignments and discussion. The student can expect to apply material learned in the academic setting while being exposed to new information based upon the client needs and the setting. Fieldwork educators frequently require outside reading and written assignments to supplement and reinforce learning in the clinic.

The Fieldwork Educator provides students with positive and constructive feedback on performance. Feedback is typically provided informally on a daily basis while formal, written feedback can be expected each week. Each student must carefully review feedback and reflect on making changes in performance on an ongoing basis. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and entire OTA faculty are available to assist in this ongoing process of professional development.

Ongoing supervision throughout the fieldwork experience includes discussion of issues related to the practice of occupational therapy and the development of professional skills and behaviors. Areas of strength and for growth are identified and openly discussed. Each student needs frequent positive and constructive feedback and this should be provided in writing at least weekly. Feedback must be timely, tied to performance, and given in private when appropriate.

The Fieldwork Educator observes and documents student performance on a regular basis. The documentation allows for greater ease in recalling specifics when providing student feedback.

Students are referred to the material provided by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator as part of orientation to Level II Fieldwork on the process of supervision and education in the fieldwork setting. The publication The Successful Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Student (Sladyk, 2002) appears in the resource list and is highly recommended to students. Occupational Therapy
Fieldwork Survival Guide: A Student Planner (Napier, 2011) is a required textbook for Level I and Level II Fieldwork.

The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator is consulted and used as a resource at any time especially when a problem is identified related to performance and professional development.

**New Jersey Regulations for Supervision of OT Fieldwork Students**

The State of New Jersey provides specific mandates for supervision of occupational therapy fieldwork students. The licensure regulations can be retrieved from the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs Occupational Therapy Advisory Council at

http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/ot/Pages/regulations.aspx

The following statements are taken directly from these regulations:

Supervision means the responsible and direct involvement of a licensed occupational therapist with an occupational therapy assistant, a temporary licensed occupational therapist, a temporary licensed occupational therapy assistant, or an occupational therapy student fulfilling the required fieldwork component of his or her educational training, for the development of an occupational therapy treatment plan and the periodic review of that plan (pp. 44K-2-3).

A licensed occupational therapist may delegate selected occupational therapy services to licensed occupational therapy assistants…and to occupational therapy students fulfilling the required component of their educational training, provided the services are within the scope of the practice of the individual to whom they are delegated.

In delegating selected occupational therapy services, the licensed occupational therapist shall be responsible for exercising that degree of judgment and knowledge reasonably expected to assure that a proper delegation has been made. …(pp.44K-9-10).

The licensed occupational therapist shall be responsible for the proper supervision of persons to whom delegation is made. Such supervision shall be close, routine, or general supervision. The degree of supervision exercised over such persons shall be determined by the licensed
occupational therapist …and based on an evaluation of:

- The condition of the client
- The education, skill, and training of the person to whom the delegation is being made; and
- The nature of the tasks and activities being delegated
- When occupational therapy services are delegated …the supervising occupational therapist shall retain responsibility for all occupational therapy care of the client. (44K-10)

**Addressing Problems on Fieldwork**

Students experiencing a problem on fieldwork (performance, supervisory, or other) should discuss the issue immediately with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and the Fieldwork Educator. Both educators are able to provide guidance in resolving the problem.

The Fieldwork Educator is asked to notify the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator if student performance is below minimal acceptance. This should occur as soon as a problem is identified. In this way, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator can assist the Fieldwork Educator and the student in addressing the problem. Performance problems are addressed with the development of a learning agreement that provides a statement of the problem, learning resources, learning activities, criteria, and a time-line for improvement. (Appendix H).

Each student must be notified about performance problems and/or potential failure so that every attempt can be made to resolve them. The learning agreement described above is part of this Due Process. In some cases, the fieldwork time frame may be extended to allow for demonstration of improvement and mastery of the fieldwork objectives.

There are times when students are unable to meet the objectives of the fieldwork experience because of problems with the knowledge base and/or the application of skills in the fieldwork setting. In situations where client and/or staff safety are considered to be compromised, immediate termination of the fieldwork experience will occur. A problem with professional or ethical behavior as described in this manual and/or as defined by the fieldwork site can result in an automatic failing grade for the fieldwork and for the course. A student who chooses to leave a fieldwork placement without discussing the problem with the Academic Fieldwork Educator and Fieldwork Education Coordinator will receive a failing grade for the course.
Performance Assessment

The process of performance assessment occurs throughout the fieldwork experience as an integral component of clinical supervision. The Fieldwork Educator should seek feedback from other facility professionals and team members who have been involved with the student when compiling the formal student evaluation. Each student should be encouraged to assess him or herself and strive for improvement on an ongoing basis.

The OTA Program’s Level I Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Student (appendix E) is used at midterm and final to evaluate and provide formal feedback regarding each student’s progress towards the Level I objectives. This tool is modified to correspond with the specific objectives of each Level I Fieldwork: A, B, and C. The rating scale for the Level I evaluation is consistent with the AOTA Level II Fieldwork Performance Evaluation for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Student. The Fieldwork Educators should send or fax the midterm and the final evaluation that is signed by all parties to the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator immediately to ensure timely processing of student grades at Rutgers SHP.

The AOTA Level II Fieldwork Evaluation (FWE) for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Student is used at midterm and final to evaluate and provide formal feedback regarding each student’s progress towards Level II objectives.

Each of the 24 items on the FWE must be scored using a 4-point rating scale as follows:

- 4- Exceeds Standards
- 3- Meets Standards
- 2- Needs Improvement
- 1- Unsatisfactory

A specific description of the rating scale is included on the evaluation tool. Fieldwork Educators are reminded to study the rating scale and use the description of the rating carefully when applying the score. Midterm and final ratings are recorded on the Performance Rating Sheet included on the evaluation form.
Students must receive a score of 3 or better for all items in the Fundamentals of Practice section (Ethics and Safety) on the final evaluation in order to pass the fieldwork experience.

**Performance score guide for midterm and final**

The Fieldwork Performance Evaluation, satisfactory and unsatisfactory performance at Midterm and Final are defined as follows:

Overall Midterm Score:
- Satisfactory Performance: 54 points and above
- Unsatisfactory Performance: 53 points and below

Overall Final Score
- Pass: 70 points and above
- No Pass: 69 points and below

The Fieldwork Educator should send or fax the midterm and the final evaluation that is signed by all parties to the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator immediately to ensure timely processing of student grades at Rutgers.

The final responsibility for grade assignments rests with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Comments and other information supplied by the Fieldwork Educator will be used in determining the final grade. Level II Fieldwork is graded as Pass or Fail; letter grades are not used.

**Student Assessment of Fieldwork**

Each student must complete the Student Assessment of Level I Fieldwork Experience or the Student Assessment of Level II Fieldwork Experience and discuss with the fieldwork educator at final (appendices G, I). The form must be signed by the Fieldwork Educator and student, and a copy sent to the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator with the student final performance evaluation.

These tools are an important source of communication among the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, the Fieldwork Educator, and the student. The information is used to assist the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator in planning future student placements and to ensure ongoing integration of the OTA Program’s curriculum design with fieldwork education in accordance with ACOTE standards.

**Level II Fieldwork Failure**

When a student receives a failing grade (>69 points) on the AOTA FW Evaluation for the OTA Student, or the fieldwork is terminated due to failing performance or unprofessional behavior or
safety issues, the following procedure is used:

1. The student is immediately removed from the fieldwork site and meets with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and Faculty Academic Advisor. A written correction plan of correction and development, with time frames and resources, is developed and executed within one month.
2. Steps to correct the issues may include, but are not limited to, additional coursework, independent study, professional counseling/therapy, and medical treatment.
3. Once the student takes steps to correct the issues that caused the failure and is able to demonstrate mastery of the identified content, skills, or other behavior, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator collaborates with the student to plan another Level II fieldwork experience.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program permits one opportunity to repeat and successfully complete a Level II Fieldwork that has been failed. Failure of a second Level II Fieldwork will result in dismissal from the program.

If a student has a medical condition or extenuating life circumstance that interferes with fieldwork, he or she may request for a withdrawal or an early termination of the fieldwork with a grade of Incomplete. The student must provide documentation regarding the situation. For medical conditions, this documentation must include a note from a physician indicating the date the student may resume fieldwork. Withdrawal must occur within the timeline set by the University for such action.

In the case of an approved withdrawal from or an Incomplete in a Level II fieldwork experience, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator assigns the student to a new fieldwork placement. This new placement may take time to arrange, and will likely interfere with progression in the OTA program and postpone graduation.

If a student chooses to withdraw from his or her fieldwork placement without the approval of the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, he or she receives an ‘Unsatisfactory’ grade for the course.

**All Level II Fieldwork must be completed within 12 months of the completion of the OTA Program.**

**Summary of Student Responsibilities related to Fieldwork Education**

Fieldwork education is complex, with requirements and responsibilities that are different from those required in academic coursework.
Students are responsible for:

- Active participation in the fieldwork planning process with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and Fieldwork Educator, including interviews as required.
- Maintaining certification in CPR and submitting documentation of such to the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.
- Contacting the assigned fieldwork site prior to the start of the experience as instructed by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.
- Submitting health information and other documentation to fieldwork sites as requested.
- Attendance, punctuality, and active participation in the fieldwork experience and supervision process.
- Professional and Ethical behavior.
- Being prepared for each fieldwork session and making the fieldwork educator aware of assignment requirements and deadlines.
- Active participation in on-line discussion and on-campus meetings as arranged by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.
- Completing self-assessment at midterm and final.
- Bringing any problems related to fieldwork education immediately to the attention of the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.
- Remaining at the fieldwork site for the duration of the experience unless extenuating circumstances require an interruption or change in placement.
- Completing an evaluation of the fieldwork site at the completion of the experience.

(Costa, 2004)
Resources for Fieldwork Education


Scope of Practice for the Occupational Therapy Assistant

Please consult:


The State of New Jersey provides mandates the scope of practice for the OTA in the State of New Jersey through the Division of Consumer Affairs Occupational Therapy Advisory Council Regulations. This entire document can be retrieved from http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/ot/Pages/regulations.aspx

Scope of practice of a licensed Occupational Therapy Assistant:

1. The scope of practice of a licensed occupational therapy assistant, working under the supervision of a licensed occupational therapist as provided in N.J.A.C. 13:44K-6.1, shall include:

   1. The provision of direct, indirect and/or consultative services to a client affected by physical, psycho-social, cognitive, congenital and/or developmental disorders or the aging process, to improve and/or prevent loss of physical or mental functioning and to promote wellness;

   2. The administration of standardized and/or non-standardized assessments and/or the observation of a client and the environment to assist in the identification of functional abilities and deficits. Areas, which may be assessed shall include the performance of activities of daily living, including recreation, leisure or work related skills which are affected by sensory, motor, developmental, perceptual, cognitive, and/or psychosocial abilities:

   3. Assisting in the development and implementation of an intervention plan for the client:

   4. The development and utilization of, and education and training in, purposeful, task- oriented activities for the client to improve, restore and/or maintain optimal performances of life skills,
OTA Program Student Manual Signature Page

The undersigned indicates, by his or her signature that he or she has received and read the Rutgers/SHP Occupational Therapy Assistant Student Manual and the Rutgers/SHP Student Handbook and is, therefore cognizant of the University, School and Program policies and is responsible for compliance with these policies for the period of enrollment in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program.

________________________________________________________________________

Print Name

________________________________________________________________________

Signature

________________________________________________________________________

Date

Please make a copy of this for your records and return the original to the OTA Program Director by the date given at orientation.