

Technical Standards for the Master of Health Science in Occupational Therapy

The mission of Augusta University is to improve health and reduce the burden of illness in society by discovering, disseminating, and applying knowledge of human health and disease. The Department of Occupational Therapy (OT) provides graduate professional education to prepare a quality health professional who represents this mission and the entry level standards established by the Accreditation Council of Occupational Therapy Education of the American Occupational Therapy Association. Students should be able to promote health practices and apply effective interventions to reduce the burden of illness and disability. OT students should be able to meet academic standards; display appropriate behaviors, interpersonal skills and professionalism; use effective communication; apply competent therapeutic skills, and advocate for optimal health promotion practices. Occupational therapy students need a realistic understanding of the profession within varied settings. Students should understand the role distinction between the occupational therapist and the occupational therapy assistant. Students should be able to work effectively with a variety of populations across the age span with a respectful understanding of diverse ranges of impairments or disabilities, cultures, socioeconomic status, spirituality, and race.

The OT curriculum requires the graduate student to be able to perform the following technical standard areas:

ACADEMIC SKILLS:

- In a timely manner, employ logical thinking, critical analysis, problem solving, and creativity in a variety of settings.
- Perform evidenced based reviews of the literature to guide informed decision making.
- Perform critical reasoning to include appropriate screening, assessing, planning, providing care strategies, and formulate client and family centered education, and discharge preparations within a variety of settings and specified timelines.
- Gather and measure relevant data and synthesize results.
- Pose relevant questions and seek out appropriate responses in a timely manner.
- Demonstrate the ability to multi-task and address complex needs or solve dynamic problems.
- Generate graduate level papers, meet competency levels on exams, and replicate demonstrations.
- Prioritize and organize multiple workload needs.
- Demonstrate scholarly research skills appropriate for a graduate level program.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS:

- Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills.
- Document scholarly work for external reviewers.
- Demonstrate computer competence in the use of word processing, computerized simulators, media software, databases and search engines.
- Articulate effectively to consumers, supervisors, peers, reimbursement sources, other health care professionals, clients and their families, as well as general audiences to meet clients' needs.
- Demonstrate the ability to teach others prevention, health maintenance restorative and compensation skills.

- Appropriately use non-verbal skills to analyze and communicate needs in a professionally acceptable manner.

THERAPEUTIC SKILLS:

- Possess sufficient motor function to elicit essential data from the manipulation of assessment materials and therapeutic technologies and equipment.
- Safely move, handle, and transfer various clients independently (up to 150 pounds).
- Perform manual dexterity tasks sufficient to fabricate orthotic devices, adapt equipment, and fabricate splints.
- Use sufficient sensory systems to safely utilize thermal, auditory, and electrical modalities.
- Safely perceive and navigate varied environments and communities.
- Adjust personal posture, mobility, coordination, strength, and energy for the therapeutic process.
- Modify environments for the well-being of others.
- Provide recommendations and training in techniques to enhance mobility, including physical transfers, wheelchair management, community mobility, and driver rehabilitation issues.
- Perform psychomotor skills in a timely manner for safety and competency considerations.

BEHAVIORAL-INTERPERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ABILITIES:

- Ability to effectively work with others who may have a range of impairments or disabilities.
- Ability to place personal needs secondary to the needs of others
- Ability to respond and adjust actions or behaviors in response to supervision and client needs.
- Ability to demonstrate empathy, integrity and sincere concern for others.
- Ability to display appropriate social and interpersonal skills within a variety of settings and cultures.
- Be motivated to seek out professional self-development opportunities.
- Display flexibility and adaptation appropriate to the demands and the needs of clients and their families.
- Value the importance of the use of self to motivate and assist others.
- Display appropriate language, attire, and mannerisms in all professional environments including the classroom.
- Articulate personal needs in an appropriate and professional manner.
- Use sound judgment in regard to the safety of self and others and adhere to safety regulations within a variety of settings.
- Value the role of sociocultural, socioeconomic, spirituality, diversity factors, and lifestyle choices when interacting with others.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the use of self, including personality, insights, perceptions, and judgments, as a part of individual and group interactions.
- Demonstrate the ability to work well with others.
- Accept lifelong learning and competence expectations as a personal value.
- Display honesty and integrity and personal responsibilities for behavior consistent of ethical professional occupational therapists.

HEALTH PROMOTION PRACTICES:

- Display good health practices and hygiene for safe interaction with others
- Update immunization records for safety.
- Update certifications in CPR and First Aid within appropriate timelines.
- Understand the importance of personal health, habits, and the prevention of disease/infection.

- Display an awareness of personal issues and report issues that would interfere with the ability to perform therapeutic skills competently.

Graduate applicants or students are encouraged to ask questions regarding the Technical Standards for any needed clarification. The Department of OT complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act; it is the policy of Augusta University to ensure that all students with disabilities are afforded equal opportunity and access to programs and facilities. Students are encouraged to identify their disability so AU can determine what reasonable accommodation may be made. Please contact the Office of Testing and Disability Services to self-identify.

If you have knowledge or concerns about the ability to meet the above Standards, do not sign this document at this time. Please follow the policy identified in the previous paragraph.

You are asked to confirm you have reviewed **Augusta University's Department of Occupational Therapy's Technical Standards for the Master of Health Science in Occupational Therapy** and, if appropriate, sign the document attesting to your ability to perform the items identified in the standards.