



Occupational Therapy Professional Master's Student Handbook 2026-2027

Occupational Therapy Department
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Professional Master of Science Degree Program

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Introduction

Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences (NWCNHS) **Occupational Therapy Department**

Vision

The vision of the Occupational Therapy Department is to be locally and globally recognized for quality occupational therapy education, community engagement, research, and scholarly activity.

Mission

The mission of the Occupational Therapy Department is to establish excellence in occupational therapy education, research, and scholarly activities as well as to prepare culturally knowledgeable entry-level practitioners who will provide evidence-based occupational therapy services to a locally and globally diverse community. The Department's mission reflects the College's mission to teach, conduct research, and serve the community. The College prepares diverse health care professionals as providers and leaders in the delivery of high quality, accessible, culturally competent care within a highly technological and global environment.

NWCNHS Vision:

The vision of the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences is to be nationally recognized as a leader in nursing and health sciences education, pioneering research, innovation, and transformative patient and community care.

NWCNHS Mission:

The mission of the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences is to:

- Prepare healthcare professionals to serve as compassionate providers and future leaders.
- Deliver excellence in education, research, scholarship, clinical practice, and service.
- Foster innovation, interprofessional collaboration, and strategic partnerships to advance healthcare.
- Generate and translate knowledge that improves health outcomes and informs evidence-based practice.
- Engage communities to address current and emerging healthcare challenges through education, research, and service.

The Occupational Therapy Department's Vision and Mission are aligned with the strategic priorities of Florida International University and the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences. Consistent with FIU's *Experience Impact 2030* and the College's *Vision in Action 2026–2031 Strategic*

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Plan, the Department is committed to advancing excellence in occupational therapy education, research, scholarship, innovation, and service through the pillars of the FIU Experience, Strategic Alliances, and Research Excellence. These priorities guide the Department's commitment to preparing future occupational therapists who improve health, participation, and quality of life through meaningful occupation.

Program Philosophy

Philosophical Overview

The FIU Occupational Therapy Department embraces the Philosophical Base of OT as stated by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA, 2017):

Occupations are activities that bring meaning to the daily lives of individuals, families, communities, and populations and enable them to participate in society. All individuals have an innate need and right to engage in meaningful occupations throughout their lives. Participation in these occupations influences development, health, and well-being across the lifespan. Thus, participation in meaningful occupations is a determinant of health and leads to adaptation.

Occupations occur within diverse social, physical, cultural, personal, temporal, and virtual contexts. The quality of occupational performance and the experience of each occupation are unique in every situation because of the dynamic relationship among factors intrinsic to the individual, the environment and contexts in which the occupation occurs, and the characteristics of the occupation.

The focus and outcome of occupational therapy are clients' engagement in meaningful occupations that support their participation in life situations. Occupational therapy practitioners conceptualize occupations as both a means and an end in therapy. That is, there is therapeutic value in occupational engagement as a change agent, and engagement in occupations is the goal of therapy.

Occupational therapy is based on the belief that occupations are fundamental to health promotion and wellness, remediation or restoration, health maintenance, disease and injury prevention, and compensation and adaptation. The use of occupation to promote individual, family, community, and population health is the core of occupational therapy practice, education, research, and advocacy.

Consistent with the Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy, the FIU Occupational Therapy Department is committed to preparing reflective, evidence-informed, and occupation-centered practitioners who demonstrate leadership, ethical practice, scholarship, innovation, and interprofessional collaboration. The Department recognizes meaningful occupation as the foundation for promoting health, participation, and quality of life among individuals, groups, communities, and populations. Our program philosophy is further informed by the American Occupational Therapy Association's Vision 2030 and its foundational pillars, reflecting the profession's commitment to excellence, innovation, leadership,

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advocacy, occupational justice, and advancing occupational participation (AOTA, 2021).

Core Values

The FIU Occupational Therapy Department follows the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) 2025 Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics. Embedded within the Code are the profession's eight Core Values, six Ethical Principles, and Standards of Conduct, which serve as the foundation for ethical decision-making, professional behavior, and responsible occupational therapy practice.

The profession is grounded in the following Core Values: Altruism, Equity, Freedom, Justice, Dignity, Truth, Prudence, and Advocacy. The Ethical Principles that guide professional conduct are Beneficence, Nonmaleficence, Autonomy, Justice, Veracity, and Fidelity. Together, these Core Values and Ethical Principles provide the ethical framework that guides occupational therapy personnel in practice, education, research, leadership, and service. Although the Core Values are not enforceable standards, they inform ethical decision-making and professional conduct. Students are expected to become familiar with and adhere to the current [AOTA 2025 Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics](#) and any subsequent revisions adopted by the Association.

As a department, we embrace, model, and teach these Core Values and Ethical Principles as integral to academic excellence, professional identity, and ethical practice. Ethical reasoning is woven throughout the curriculum and is expected in all academic, clinical, research, and professional interactions.

Consistent with FIU's mission and the needs of South Florida, the Department is committed to fostering a learning environment that promotes accessibility, respect, ethical practice, and equitable opportunities for learning and professional growth. Through this environment, students develop the knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors necessary to provide ethical, evidence-informed, and occupation-centered services that improve health, participation, and quality of life across varied practice settings. As part of this commitment, students' complete fieldwork experiences and ultimately practice in communities designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) as Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) or Medically Underserved Populations (MUPs). By preparing graduates to serve these communities, the Department supports improved access to high-quality occupational therapy services for individuals and populations with the greatest healthcare needs.

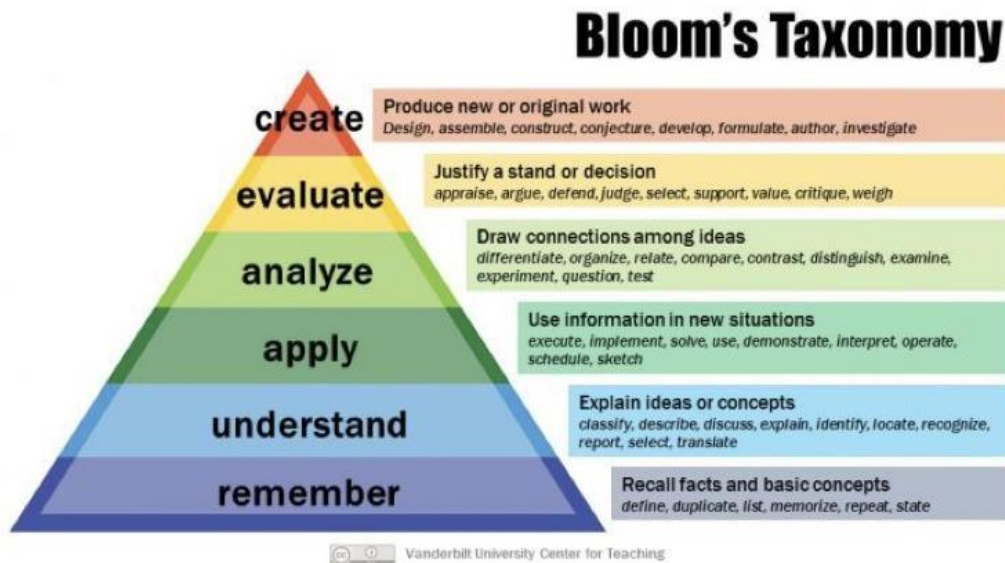
Educational Philosophy

The preparation of entry-level occupational therapists at Florida International University is a collaborative effort among students, faculty, and fieldwork educators. Graduate students progressively develop into competent professionals through a developmental sequence that builds from the foundations of the profession to theory and assessment, and ultimately to intervention and practice. At each stage of the curriculum, students are encouraged to be active learners in the process, practice self-reflection, and

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develop higher-order thinking and clinical reasoning skills. The curriculum supports active learning through laboratory instruction, experiential learning, and fieldwork opportunities that foster progressive professional growth. Faculty and fieldwork educators' model, support, and guide students throughout their professional development. Lave and Wenger (1991) described *situated learning* as “a process of participation in communities of practice” that enables newcomers to become full participants within a profession. At FIU, experiential learning and fieldwork education provide students with opportunities to participate in occupational therapy communities of practice.

Figure 1:



The Occupational Therapy Department uses Bloom’s Taxonomy as a framework for designing curriculum, learning experiences, and assessment. Faculty members incorporate Bloom’s Taxonomy into course design and syllabi to align learning outcomes, instructional activities, and assessments with the Department’s curricular philosophy and expectations for student learning.

Our commitment to teaching and learning is guided by the following principles:

- Learning is an active and collaborative process. Bloom’s Taxonomy uses “action words” to describe the cognitive processes by which thinkers encounter and work with knowledge.
- Building knowledge is the goal. There are different types of knowledge used in cognition: factual knowledge, conceptual knowledge, procedural knowledge, and metacognitive knowledge.
- Inherent in building knowledge is learning how to learn, creating lifelong learners, and developing the ability to transfer knowledge across contexts.
- Active learning is facilitated through reflection, critiquing, critical analysis, collaboration, and discussion.
- Teaching students to be reflective and critical thinkers is central to the educational process. The curriculum fosters the acquisition of clinical reasoning, critical thinking, and judgment through

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teaching and active learning activities that promote reflective and evidence-based decision-making in a student-centered learning environment.

- Teaching and learning are collaborative processes between faculty and students. Faculty who are well-informed educators and scholars foster and model the level of excellence expected of students. As a department, we are committed to teaching students how to learn and designing learning activities that challenge students intellectually, convey accurate information, and promote their professional development as occupation-based and client-centered practitioners.
- Students have a responsibility in the teaching and learning process. Students are expected to demonstrate consistent preparation and participation in the collaborative learning process to achieve the required levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Framework for the Curriculum Design

The professional program is conceptualized around four curricular themes: Culture, People, and Community; occupational performance; community engagement; and research and evidence-based practice. Under Curriculum Sequence, courses are presented by semester, by placement in the curriculum by design (e.g., foundations and occupational performance), and by the relationship of the course content to the curricular themes.

Curriculum Themes

The FIU OT curriculum embodies four themes. The themes are interwoven and emphasized in greater depth at different points and within different courses throughout the curriculum. Student learning and program outcomes are articulated for each theme.

Culture, People, and Community: FIU, the College, and the OT Department have mission statements that include serving the varied needs of our community and preparing culturally knowledgeable entry-level practitioners. The demographics of our OT students are 69% Hispanic, 9% Black non-Hispanic, 19% White non-Hispanic, and 3% Asian/Pacific Islander, similar to the overall makeup of FIU and Miami-Dade County. The OT Department is committed, through the education of our students, to promoting an environment of accessibility and equal opportunity for all populations. Becoming culturally responsive requires students to develop the self-awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary to respond effectively to all individuals and populations. Courses in the curriculum help students examine their own values and beliefs and become more self-aware. As students interact with course content and with the community of practice (OTs, other professionals, clients, families, etc.), they have opportunities to reflect, learn, and engage in more meaningful and thoughtful ways. This responsiveness can lead to improved outcomes through client-centered and client/family-centered practices.

Occupational Performance: “Occupation is used to mean all the things people want, need, or have to do, whether of physical, mental, social, sexual, political, or spiritual nature and is inclusive of sleep and rest.

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It refers to all aspects of actual human doing, being, becoming, and belonging. The practical, everyday medium of self-expression or of making or experiencing meaning, occupation is the activist element of human existence whether occupations are contemplative, reflective, and meditative or action based” (Wilcock & Townsend, 2014, p. 542).

Occupational therapists recognize the complex nature of occupations and the performance skills required to engage in those occupations. There is an abundance of evidence that engagement in meaningful occupations has health-promotion and disease-prevention benefits. The curriculum focuses on the Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) model, recognizing that the person, environment, and occupation work together to support performance. Through the curriculum and course sequence, students are progressively taught about the occupational therapy process as defined in the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (AOTA, 2020b). Students develop skills in clinical reasoning, therapeutic use of self, and activity analysis. Using these skills, students apply this knowledge to address performance issues across the lifespan—first through assessment, followed by planning and goal writing, intervention, and outcomes.

Community Engagement: Community engagement is explicitly a part of the mission and vision of the University, the NWCNHS, and the OT Department. Community is defined as a broad construct that includes OT, our interdisciplinary partners and team members, individuals and families, and the populations we serve. This engagement has the potential to benefit all stakeholders—the students, clients, and faculty. South Florida is home to a unique population. The goal of community engagement is to provide students with learning opportunities that support professional growth and as stated in the AOTA 2030 Vision, to identify and provide effective solutions that facilitate participation in everyday living (AOTA, 2017b).

Engagement can take the form of research, programming, and collaborative projects. Throughout the curriculum, students are provided with opportunities to engage with the community through guest lecturers, experts in traditional and emerging practice, community visits, and interactions with people of differing abilities. Teaching, modeling, and assignments assist students in engaging, learning, and reflecting community practice skills.

Research and Evidence-Based Practice: Occupational therapy is a science-driven profession. ACOTE (2023) standards for MSOT programs recognize that the curriculum must promote scholarly activity to promote the profession, establish new knowledge, and enable students to interpret and apply knowledge to practice. Standard B.5.2 states: “Participate in scholarly activities that align with current research priorities and advance knowledge translation, professional practice, service delivery, or professional issues (e.g., scholarship of discovery, scholarship of integration, scholarship of application, scholarship of teaching and learning)”. Our curriculum is designed to introduce, develop, and foster the appreciation and use of research and scholarship. Students learn how to choose and apply scientific methodologies to address questions of interest. Students learn how to find and use evidence to drive clinical decision-

making. The clinical decision-making process of question development, literature review, appraisals, application, and evaluation of usefulness is broadly applied. Students are asked to provide rationales and support evidence when making clinical practice decisions.

Research can help inform and support best practices. The curriculum includes a two-semester sequence in which students, in collaboration with faculty mentors, develop and implement a research project. The project culminates in a research symposium (a sponsored event involving multiple local OT programs that provides CEUs for practitioners), where students disseminate their findings. The research focus is meant to help students develop skills in the appraisal and use of evidence and contribute to the knowledge base of the profession, with the aim of creating a foundation for lifelong learning and supporting OT as a science-driven and science-informed profession working to meet society's occupational needs.

Curricular Sequence

To effectively respond to the demands of dynamic healthcare systems, graduates of entry-level occupational therapy programs must be flexible, autonomous, broadly educated generalists and leaders who utilize creativity and sound clinical reasoning while engaging in solution-focused processes. Bloom's Taxonomy is used as a guide to facilitate progress from beginner to entry-level therapist. The curriculum is sequenced to support students as they move up the Taxonomy to more complex learning and knowledge of construction (remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating). There is a planned progression to build upon and develop knowledge and skills at increasing levels of complexity, competence, and integration. The OT Practice Framework is used to define the OT process and help students construct the knowledge and skills necessary to help the people or populations we serve fulfill occupational roles. Learning activities shape students' holistic understanding of the relationship between occupation and occupational performance, including the areas of daily living, work or productive activities, as well as play and leisure.

The curriculum sequence follows a developmental structure from Foundations to the OT Process to Practice. Throughout the stages, the four curricular themes are emphasized, and learning is facilitated using Bloom's Taxonomy.

1. **General Bodies of Knowledge** – Reflects broad areas of study (e.g., social, behavioral, biological, and physical sciences, education, and contemporary society) that serve as foundations for the basic premises of occupational therapy. This foundational knowledge focuses on remembering and understanding content for use throughout the program. It includes our pre-professional classes—the prerequisites.
2. **Foundations/Theory** – At the start of the program, students gain knowledge of various areas, such as the theoretical foundations of the profession, clinical conditions, activity analysis, human behavior, and occupational performance across the lifespan. The focus is to remember and understand the interdependent relationship between one's ability or inability to engage in occupation and participation in life. Students understand and begin to apply knowledge of practice models and frames of reference to selected cases. This requires students to begin utilizing the clinical reasoning process when selecting models and frames

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of reference in the application process.

3. **Occupational Performance and Adaptation Across the Lifespan** – Focuses on the influence of factors such as clinical conditions, performance skills, performance patterns, context, activity demands, and client factors on occupational performance. Typical and non-typical development are examined through the lens of occupational performance. At this stage, previously constructed knowledge is organized and applied. For example, in several courses at this stage, students are required to complete a case study assignment in which they apply theoretical knowledge, knowledge of diagnosed conditions, and PEO factors across the lifespan. These are primarily lecture courses in which information is shared through lectures, discussions, readings, media, assignments, and interactive experiences. Opportunities for practice are provided in the smaller lab sections.
4. **Application of the OT Process: Assessment and Planning** – These courses are primarily the lab sections of the lecture courses. Students learn about performance and adaptation and then learn about applying that information in small-group learning labs. Students learn, practice, and demonstrate competence in selecting assessments, administering assessments, and engaging in the initial planning and goal-writing process. The coursework reinforces prior and co-requisite learning. At this stage, clinical reasoning is advanced and refined. The student applies knowledge gained through didactic coursework to practical simulations, especially as it applies to linking theory, assessment choices, and the development of plans of care. This requires students to apply, analyze, and evaluate OT processes.
5. **Application of the OT Process: Intervention** – The intervention courses are primarily in Year 2 of the program. Students gain knowledge of intervention across the major domains of mental health, physical dysfunction, and pediatrics. The student must apply problem-solving skills to assorted clinical contexts for the application of knowledge and skills in diversified environments, using the skills of analyzing, evaluating, and creating goals and intervention strategies. Students attend Level I fieldwork experiences and begin to create plans, goals, and interventions.
6. **Professional Practice Skills** – These courses help the student build a professional identity and instill acceptance of self as a professional, with recognition of concomitant responsibilities, duties, and rewards. As part of the program—engaging in presentations, clinical competencies, and fieldwork—the student is expected to embody a professional identity that expresses the curricular themes. The Integrative Seminar courses help students think broadly about their learning and applications across multiple contexts, including emerging practice areas.
7. **Synthesis of Practice and Evidence** – There are four research courses across the five didactic semesters. Within the research curriculum, the student is required to analyze and combine ideas or results from evidence in meaningful ways. Evidence-based practice requires the ability to formulate a clinical question, find and evaluate the strength of relevant evidence, and determine how (or if) there is evidence to answer the clinical question. Students have opportunities to practice these skills throughout the program. In collaboration with faculty, students plan, implement, and deliver a presentation on a scholarly project. This process—the generation and use of evidence—is a professional responsibility, and students are

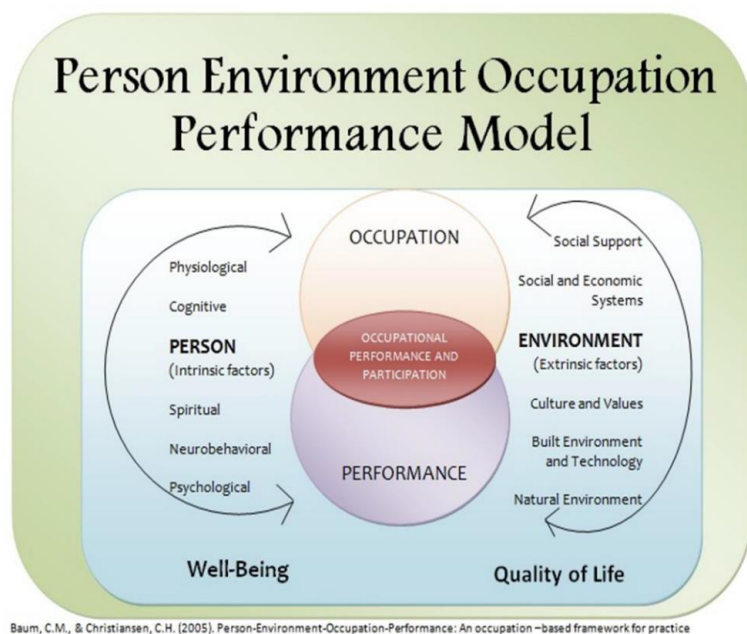
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expected to carry this forward into their Level II fieldwork. It is also a cornerstone of ongoing professional development.

Figure 2: Curricular Sequence

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Pre-OT		Occupational Foundations		Occupational Process		Occupational Practice						
General Bodies of Knowledge		Foundations Theory		Occupational Performance and Adaptation Across the life span		Application of the OT Process Assessment and Planning		Application of the OT Process Intervention		Professional Practice Skills		Professional Practice of Scholarly Inquiry
The PEOP Model and our curricular themes are infused throughout the sequence.												

Figure 3: PEOP Model for Practice



The curriculum sequence is developmental and organized around Bloom’s Taxonomy. The curricular content is organized around the Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) Model (Baum, Christiansen, & Bass, 2015), which reflects the faculty’s beliefs about occupation-based, client-centered practice. The PEOP Model is integrated into each course. The curriculum scope and sequence are designed to first expose students to “typical” occupational development and performance. Based on an understanding of typical development and occupational performance, the second year of the curriculum focuses on occupational performance dysfunction and occupational therapy intervention to support participation in life across the lifespan.

Curricular Sequence: Courses clustered in relationship to curricular sequence

Curricular Sequence		
General Bodies of Knowledge- prerequisites/pre-OT		
Human Growth and Development - Life Span		3
Abnormal Psychology		3
Statistics		3
Biology/Lab*		3
Physiology*		3
Anatomy/Lab		3-4
Medical Terminology		1-3
Neuroscience: 3000 or above		3
*Anatomy & Physiology I & II can substitute for Anatomy/Lab and Physiology		
Curricular Sequence		
Foundations / Theory		
OTH 5011	Foundation of Occupational Therapy Practice	3
OTH 5224	Conditions Affecting Occupational Performance	3
OTH 5202	Occupational Development: Infancy Throughout Adolescence	3
OTH 5203	Occupational Development: Adulthood and Aging	3
OTH 5414	Analysis & Adaptation in Human Motion	3
Occupational Performance and Adaptation across the Life Span		
OTH 5162	Therapeutic Approaches in Occupational Therapy	3
OTH 5202	Occupational Development: Infancy Throughout Adolescence	3
OTH 6195	Assistive Technology & the Environment	2
OTH5203	Occupational Development: Adulthood and Aging	3
OTH 5430	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy I	2
OTH 6431	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy II	3
OTH 5301	Adaptation of Human Occupation and Environment for Psychosocial Practice I	2
OTH 5524	Occupation-based Intervention for Pediatric Populations	3
OTH 5438	Adult Neurorehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy	3
OTH 5843C	Adaptation of Human Occupation and Environment for Psychosocial Practice II	3
Application of the OT Process: Assessment and Planning		
OTH 5162L	Therapeutic Approaches in Occupational Therapy Lab	1

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OTH 5202L	Occupational Development: Infancy Throughout Adolescence Lab	1
OTH 6195L	Assistive Technology & the Environment Lab	1
OTH 5414L	Analysis & Adaptation in Human Motion Lab	1
OTH 5430L	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy I Lab	1
OTH 5217	Occupational Engagement Throughout the Continuum of Care	2
OTH 6431L	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy II Lab	1
OTH 5301L	Adaptation of Human Occupation and Environment for Psychosocial Practice I Lab	1
OTH 5524L	Occupation-based Intervention for Pediatric Populations Lab	1
OTH 5438L	Adult Neurorehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy Lab	1
OTH 5725	Management and Community Based Practice in Occupational Therapy	3
Application of the OT Process: Intervention		
OTH 5430L	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy I Lab	1
Curricular Sequence		
OTH 5217L	Occupational Engagement Throughout the Continuum of Care Lab	1
OTH 5301L	Adaptation of Human Occupation and Environment for Psychosocial Practice I Lab	1
OTH 6431L	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy II	1
OTH 5524L	Occupation-based Intervention for Pediatric Populations Lab	1
OTH 5438L	Adult Neurorehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy Lab	1
OTH 5843C	Adaptation of Human Occupation and Environment for Psychosocial Practice II	3
OTH 5725	Management and Community Based Practice in Occupational Therapy	3
Professional Practice Skills		
OTH 5922L	Integrative Seminar	2
OTH 5843C	Adaptation of Human Occupation and Environment for Psychosocial Practice II – Level I FW	3
OTH 5430L	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy I Lab- Level I FW	1
OTH 5845	Level II Fieldwork I	6
OTH 5846	Level II Fieldwork II	6
Professional Practice of Scholarly Inquiry		
OTH 5760	Current Research in Occupational Therapy	3
OTH 6772	Evidence Based Practice and Critical Appraisal	3
OTH 6972	Master's Project Implementation	3
OTH 6973	Master's Project Implementation	3

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Student Learning Outcomes:

The Department prepares competent entry-level occupational therapists through a curriculum that focuses on cultural responsiveness and globalization, occupational performance, community engagement, and research and evidence-based practice (**Curricular Themes**). Our graduates demonstrate the following core competencies.

A. Culture, People, and Community

Graduates will:

- a. Understand their own cultural background, attitudes and beliefs and demonstrate knowledge and respect for differences – with the ability to modify responses to meet the needs of individuals and populations.
- b. Identify issues related to culture that impact the delivery of occupational therapy services in communities with varied needs, both locally and globally.
- c. As a part of the OT process, demonstrate self-awareness, knowledge, and skill in implementing culturally responsive programming.

B. Occupational Performance: Competent in client-centered, occupation-based practice

Graduates will:

- a. Demonstrate entry-level competencies by engaging in a theoretically informed process of evaluation, screening, and intervention that is client-centered, culturally responsive, and occupation-based across populations, settings, and practice areas.
- b. Utilize clinical reasoning to select relevant screening and assessment methods while considering such factors as client's priorities, context(s), theories, and evidence-based practice.
- c. Collaborate with clients, family, and significant others throughout the occupational therapy process.
- d. Establish an accurate and appropriate plan using clinical reasoning and based on the evaluation results, through integrating multiple factors such as client's priorities, context(s), theories, and evidence-based practice.
- e. Demonstrate safe and ethical practice.
- f. Effectively communicate in both oral and written formats about the OT process.

C. Community Engagement

Graduates will:

- a. Effectively articulate the value of occupation to diverse communities.
- b. Collaborate with stakeholders in developing therapeutic programs based upon the needs identified by the community including emerging practice areas
- c. Influence policies, practice, and education by being advocates for the distinct value of occupational therapy for individuals, populations, organizations by promoting an

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environment of inclusivity and equal access.

- d. Engage in formal/informal leadership activities at local and global levels to enhance the role of occupational therapy and serve communities and communities of OT practice.

D. Competent Research and Evidence-Based Practitioners

Graduates will:

- a. Evaluate, synthesize, and apply evidence-based practice (EBP) to create a specific program and/or intervention to promote efficacious, client-centered, culturally relevant practice.
- b. Increase the body of knowledge in OT practice and health-related professions through preparation & dissemination of scholarship.

Program Outcomes:

Graduates of Florida International University Occupational Therapy Program shall:

- A. Understand and appreciate the importance and relevance of human occupation and **occupational performance** to the unique characteristics of the person and environment in which the person is functioning.
 - a. Identify, with the client, the personal meaning of occupations that yield unique characteristics of the individual and the context
 - b. Enable the client to perform personally valued and relevant occupations by collaborating with the client to remediate and/or compensate for performance skills that have been barriers
 - c. Design and provide services to ameliorate, maintain, or prevent deficits in occupational performance of self-care, education, work, play, leisure, and social participation
 - d. Solve problems related to occupational performance through creative reasoning skills that regenerate the client's sense of hope.
- B. Be committed to **evidence-based practice** and be competent in **research**
 - a. Assume responsibility to seek evidence for continuously improving practice
 - b. Participate in activities that advance theoretical and practical knowledge through preparation and dissemination of scholarship
 - c. Engage in learning about new development and emerging areas of practice and critically apply new skills into practice
 - d. Select relevant screening and assessment methods while considering such factors as client's priorities, context(s), theories, and evidence-based practice
 - e. Establish an accurate and appropriate plan based on the evaluation results, through integrating

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multiple factors such as client's priorities, context(s), theories, and evidence-based practice.

C. Be competent in **culturally aware**, client-centered, occupation-based, interprofessional practice (**local & global**, emerging practice)

- a. Practice with the belief that the most important and valid perspective regarding occupational therapy outcome is that of the client
- b. Build and maintain collaborative relationships with the client, family, and significant others, other members of the healthcare teams throughout the occupational therapy process.
- c. Demonstrate entry-level competencies by engaging in a theoretically informed process of evaluation, screening and intervention that is client-centered, culturally responsive, and occupation-based
- d. Reflect the values and attitudes of the profession through ethical practice, social justice, and cultural responsibility
- e. Identify issues related to culture that impact the delivery of OT services in a culturally diverse community
- f. Influence policies, practice, and education by being advocates for occupational therapy for all individuals, populations, and organizations.
- g. Honor the uniqueness of all clients through a non-judgmental relationship that fosters inclusivity and equal access.
- h. Respect the trust granted by a client and appreciate the responsibility of consensual therapy by exercising sound clinical judgment
- i. Develop partnerships with groups representing persons who are disabled in order to advocate for social justice and promote full participation in valued roles
- j. Openly experience the perspective of different cultural groups with the global community

D. Adopt a stance of life-long **community engagement** and contribute to the **local and global community** in the health and well-being

- a. Collaborate with stakeholders in developing programming based upon the needs identified by the community including emerging practice areas
- b. Act at the local level in one's immediate community recognizing that by participating locally one is also contributing globally.

Curricular Sequence: Courses clustered in relationship to the academic calendar

Florida International University Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences Professional Master of Science in Occupational Therapy Curriculum Sequence		
Fall (Year 1)		
OTH 5011	Foundation of Occupational Therapy Practice	3 credits
OTH 5162	Therapeutic Approaches in Occupational Therapy	3 credits
OTH 5162L	Therapeutic Approaches in Occupational Therapy Lab	1 credit
OTH 5414	Analysis & Adaptation Human Motion	3 credits
OTH 5414L	Analysis & Adaptation Human Motion Lab	1 credit
OTH 6772	Evidence Based Practice & Critical Appraisal	3 credits
		*Total: 14 credits
Spring (Year 1)		
OTH 5202	Occupational Development: Infancy Throughout Adolescence	3 credits
OTH 5202L	Occupational Development: Infancy Throughout Adolescence Lab	1 credit
OTH 5430	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy I	3 credits
OTH 5430L	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy I Lab	1 credit
OTH 5217	Occupational Engagement Throughout the Continuum of Care	3 credits
OTH 5217L	Occupational Engagement Throughout the Continuum of Care Lab	1 credit
OTH 6972	Master's Project	3 credits
		Total: 15 Credits
Summer (Year 1)		
OTH 6431	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy II	3 credits
OTH 6431L	Biomechanical & Rehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy II Lab	1 credit
OTH 5301	Adaptation of Human Occupation & Environment for Psychosocial Practice I	3 credits
OTH 5301L	Adaptation of Human Occupation & Environment for Psychosocial Practice I Lab	1 credit
		Total: 8 credits

*Students are required to attend a Student Success and Coping Strategies Program in the Year 1 Fall Semester for one hour a week.

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Florida International University Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences Professional Master of Science in Occupational Therapy Curriculum Sequence*		
Fall (Year 2)		
OTH 5438	Adult Neurorehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy	3 credits
OTH 5438L	Adult Neurorehabilitative Approaches in Occupational Therapy Lab	1 credit
OTH 5725	Management & Community Based Practice in Occupational Therapy	3 credits
OTH 6973	Master's Project	2 credits
OTH 5843C	Adaptation of Human Occupation & Environment for Psychosocial Practice II	2 credits
OTH 5524	Occupation-based Intervention for Pediatric Populations	3 credits
OTH 5524L	Occupation-based Intervention for Pediatric Populations Lab	1 credit
		Total: 15 credits
Spring (Year 2)		
OTH 6195	Assistive Technology & the Environment	3 credits
OTH 5845	Level II Fieldwork I	6 credits
		Total: 9 credits
Summer (Year 2)		
OTH 5846	Level II Fieldwork II	6 credits
		Total: 6 credits
TOTAL CREDITS FOR MSOT PROGRAM		67 Credits

Accreditation Status:

The Occupational Therapy Program at Florida International University is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE'S telephone number is (301) 652-6611.

Certification and Licensure

Graduates of the entry-level Professional Master of Science in Occupational Therapy program are eligible to sit for the National Certification Examination for Occupational Therapists administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). All states require occupational therapists to be licensed to practice; however, licensure requirements vary by state. In Florida, licensure requires graduation from an accredited occupational therapy program and successful completion of the NBCOT certification examination.

A felony conviction or other criminal history may affect a graduate's eligibility to sit for the NBCOT Certification Examination or obtain state licensure. Students with a criminal history, including those who have been convicted of, pleaded guilty to, or entered a plea of *nolo contendere* to a felony offense, are strongly encouraged to review the applicable NBCOT certification requirements and state licensure requirements before beginning the occupational therapy program. Eligibility requirements may vary by jurisdiction and individual circumstances; therefore, students are responsible for determining whether their history may affect their eligibility for certification or licensure.

Access, Compliance and Equal Opportunity

FIU is committed to cultivating an environment of accessibility and equal opportunity, where all are welcomed to learn, earn, and thrive. Programs, compliance requirements, and equal opportunity initiatives protected by federal and state obligations pertaining to accessibility, civil rights compliance, and equal opportunity will transition to and continue within the Division of Human Resources, with operational support by the Department of Access, Compliance, and Equal Opportunity (ACE). Visit ace.fiu.edu for more information.

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create learning environments that are accessible, functional, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities with the necessary support to complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. Students with a diagnosed disability who plan to utilize academic accommodations should contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit the DRC at the Graham Center (GC), Room 190.

The Occupational Therapy Department is committed to fostering an accessible, equitable, and inclusive environment that supports learning, professional growth, and development. As a community of educators,

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researchers, health professionals, and disability advocates, we recognize and value individual differences, perspectives, and experiences and the inherent benefit of full participation by all members of our community. An inclusive environment respects and supports all individuals. We acknowledge our responsibility to foster a welcoming and inclusive learning environment that promotes accessibility, respect, participation, and equal opportunity for all members.

Section I: General Information

Occupational Therapy Department Information

Student Performance Standards: If a student cannot demonstrate the skills and abilities identified in the Student Performance Standards document (see Appendix I), it is the student's responsibility to request appropriate accommodation. Students with a documented disability who require accommodations must register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and are responsible for working with the DRC to manage all aspects of their requested accommodations. Additional information regarding accommodations is available in the applicable FIU policy <https://policies.fiu.edu/files/138.pdf>. FIU will provide reasonable accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the program or impose an undue hardship, including accommodations that would result in significant expense, difficulty, or undue disruption to the educational process.

Email accounts: You are required to have a FIU email account. All communication from the department, faculty, and staff will be sent via FIU email. When contacting individuals in relation to your role as a student—including faculty, fieldwork educators, and community members—you are expected to use your **@fiu.edu** email account.

Attendance: Regular attendance to all lectures and labs is expected. Each faculty member determines the specific attendance policy for their respective courses. Students should consult with individual faculty members and course syllabus for specific information on attendance policies. In the event of an emergency or illness, students are expected to contact their instructors prior to the start of class. Students are responsible for all material covered during their absence.

Tardiness: Entering a classroom or lab late is disruptive to faculty and other students. Occasional unexpected situations may prevent punctuality; however, chronic tardiness is a sign of poor work habits and unprofessional behavior. Faculty may refuse entry to the classroom to any student who is tardy.

Duplication Services: The department copy machine may not be used by students. Copy machines are available at the Green Library and on the second floor of AHC-3 building.

Borrowing Equipment: All borrowed equipment must be signed out by a faculty member. Students are responsible for returning borrowed equipment to its original location and signing it back in with the appropriate faculty member. Students assume financial responsibility for borrowed equipment until it is returned.

Bulletin Boards: There is a student bulletin board on the fourth floor, outside of the Labs, in the Academic Health Center 3 (AHC-3) building. One section is reserved for information posted by students.

Posting Grades: Individual student grades may not be publicly posted by name, Social Security number, or other personally identifiable information (Buckley Amendment). Grades will not be provided by telephone by Department faculty or staff. Faculty will communicate the procedures for the distribution and review of grades, examinations, assignments, and other graded materials within their respective courses.

Class Cancellations: The Occupational Therapy Department makes every effort to maintain the established course schedule. When a class must be canceled, students will be notified as far in advance as possible. When necessary, faculty may require a make-up session or other instructional activity to ensure that course requirements and instructional expectations are met.

Laboratories: Students are responsible for maintaining a clean, safe, and professional laboratory environment. At the conclusion of each laboratory session, students must clean their work areas, properly dispose of materials, return equipment and supplies to their designated locations, and leave the laboratory in appropriate condition for subsequent use. Students must comply with all requirements outlined in the Laboratory Manual, including procedures related to safety, infection control, hand hygiene, personal protective equipment, equipment use, management of materials, and exposure of incidents. Failure to comply with established laboratory safety requirements may result in removal from the laboratory session and may be addressed in accordance with applicable course, Department, College, and University policies.

Smoking: FIU is a smoke-free campus. Smoking and vaping are prohibited in accordance with university policy. Students are expected to comply with all University requirements regarding smoking, vaping, and tobacco use while on campus.

Recording Lectures: Students may not record, photograph, reproduce, or otherwise capture course lectures, laboratory activities, presentations, discussions, or instructional materials without prior authorization from the instructor, except when permitted as part of an approved accommodation or otherwise required by university policy or applicable law. Authorization to record does not constitute permission to distribute or share recorded course content.

Electronic Devices: Personal electronic devices, including cellular phones, must be placed on silent mode and used only as permitted by the instructor during class and laboratory sessions. Unauthorized or disruptive use of electronic devices during instructional activities is prohibited. Students who anticipate an urgent need to receive a call or communication during class must notify the instructor in advance whenever possible and exit the instructional area before responding. Repeated or disruptive use of electronic devices may be addressed as a professionalism concern in accordance with applicable course and Department expectations.

Visitors: Students must obtain prior approval from the course instructor before bringing a visitor to any class, laboratory, or other instructional activity. Approval is at the discretion of the instructor and may be

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denied based on the nature of the instructional activity, safety requirements, confidentiality, space limitations, or other academic considerations. Visitors may not participate in instructional or laboratory activities unless specifically authorized by the instructor.

Graduation: Students are responsible for reviewing the University academic calendar and submitting the required **Intent to Graduate** application by the established deadline. Failure to submit the application by the University deadline may delay graduation until a subsequent semester. Students are responsible for ensuring that all University and program graduation requirements are satisfied within the required timelines. Additional information regarding graduation requirements is available in the applicable [FIU policy](#).

Social Media: All students are expected to demonstrate professional and responsible conduct when using social media and other digital communication platforms. As students in a professional program and representatives of FIU and the Occupational Therapy Department, students are expected to maintain professional standards in their online activities.

Students are expected to:

- Maintain professional, respectful, and responsible communication in all online interactions.
- Exercise appropriate judgment regarding content posted, shared, commented on, or otherwise distributed through social media or digital platforms.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries between personal and professional social media activities and utilize available privacy settings.
- Protect the privacy and confidentiality of clients, patients, peers, faculty, fieldwork educators, community partners, and others encountered through academic, clinical, fieldwork, research, or community experiences.
- Refrain from posting or sharing confidential, identifying, inappropriate, or unauthorized information, photographs, recordings, or other content obtained through educational or professional activities.
- Engage in civil and respectful discourse consistent with the ethical and professional expectations of the occupational therapy profession.

Student Services

Occupational therapy students may access University resources and services through [FIU Student Services](#). Students may also access services offered by the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences through [NWCNHS Student Services](#).

Bookstore: The FIU Bookstore is located in the Graham Center on the Modesto Maidique Campus. The bookstore carries required and recommended occupational therapy textbooks, general student supplies, and personal items. Payment may be made by cash, personal check, University/debit card, MasterCard, or Visa.

Library: Libraries are located on both campuses. Most materials related to occupational therapy are available through the Modesto Maidique Campus library. Students may access occupational therapy resources, research assistance, and other library services through the [Occupational Therapy Library Guide](#).

Center for Academic Success: Students are highly encouraged to utilize the services offered by the Center for Academic Success. Services include assistance with test anxiety, study habits, examination preparation, and reading and writing skills. The Center is located in Green Library (GL), Room 120. For additional information, contact 305-348-2441 or visit the [Center for Academic Success](#).

Center for Excellence in Writing: Students are encouraged to utilize the Center for Excellence in Writing. The Center offers personalized assistance from trained peer consultants throughout the writing process, including brainstorming, drafting, revising, and polishing. Assistance is available for papers, resumes, group projects, and presentations. The Center is located in Green Library (GL), Room 125. For additional information, visit the [Center for Excellence in Writing](#).

Student Health Center: The Student Health Center is located in the University Health Services Complex (UHSC). Student Health Services are available to currently enrolled students by appointment only and may not be utilized by family members. Healthcare providers are available during regular office hours to provide assistance and consultation regarding a variety of healthcare concerns. For additional information, contact 305-348-8385 or visit the [Student Health Center](#).

Counseling: Any student who appears to be experiencing academic difficulty in a course may receive written notification from the Occupational Therapy Department and may be requested to schedule an appointment with their faculty advisor. Students who perceive that they are experiencing academic difficulty or anticipate that challenges may arise are encouraged to discuss their concerns with their faculty advisor.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides confidential counseling and psychological services to students. The Counseling Center is located at the Modesto Maidique Campus in the University Health Services Complex (UHSC), Room 270, and may be reached at 305-348-2277. At the Biscayne Bay Campus, the Counseling Center is located in the Wolfe University Center (WUC), Room 320, and may be reached at 305-919-5305. Additional information is available through [CAPS](#).

The Victim Empowerment Program (VEP) provides free and confidential assistance to FIU students, faculty, staff, and University visitors who have experienced threatened or actual violence and provides support throughout the healing process. Confidential support and academic advocacy are available through the Victim Empowerment Program. The 24-hour crisis line is 305-348-3000 and at <http://vep.fiu.edu>. Anonymous reports may be submitted through the Ethical Panther Reporting Line by calling 888-520-0570 or through the online [Reporting Line](#). Reports to law enforcement may be made to the Florida International University Police Department at 305-348-5911.

Health Insurance: Students enrolled in the OT program at FIU are **required to obtain and maintain major medical health insurance** to cover health and medical expenses. FIU offers a Student Accident and Insurance Plan at reasonable rates for currently enrolled students. Applications and information may be obtained from Student Health Services. Benefits are described in the Student Accident and Insurance brochure, which is also available through the Student Health Services office.

Campus Safety and Emergency Plans: Policies and procedures related to on-campus safety are available through [FIU Police Website](#). The FIU Police Department may be reached at 305-348-5911.

Policies and procedures related to emergency management are available through the [FIU Emergency Management](#) website.

Policies and procedures related to occupational therapy classroom, laboratory, and fieldwork safety and precautions are published in the **Occupational Therapy Student Laboratory and Safety Manual**. The manual is available on the Occupational Therapy Department website and is reviewed with students during the first semester.

University Ombudsperson: The University Ombudsperson provides a forum for students to address and resolve concerns involving faculty, staff, departments, or programs. The University Ombudsperson may serve as a resource when a student is unsure where to obtain information or assistance regarding a particular situation or as a resource when established channels of communication have not resulted in resolution. The University Ombudsperson is located in the Graham Center (GC), Room 219, and may be reached by phone at 305-348-2797. Additional information is available through [FIU Ombudsperson](#).

Student Organizations:

Student Occupational Therapy Association: The mission of the Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) at FIU is to support and promote the growth and development of professionalism in both thought and action among students participating in the Occupational Therapy Program. Membership is open to all occupational therapy students who are registered for courses. SOTA officers include the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. A faculty advisor is selected to provide guidance and recommendations regarding SOTA's goals.

Occupational Therapy Honor Society (Pi Theta Epsilon):

The National Occupational Therapy Honor Society is Pi Theta Epsilon (PTE). The purposes of the honor society are:

1. To recognize and encourage scholastic excellence among occupational therapy students.
2. To contribute to the advancement of the field of occupational therapy through scholarly activities.
3. To provide a vehicle for professional, entry-level students enrolled in accredited occupational therapy programs to exchange information and collaborate on scholarly activities.

Specific membership criteria **are** available from the Pi Theta Epsilon Faculty Advisor. The faculty advisor will notify eligible students at the beginning of each semester and invite them to become members. A formal induction ceremony for the Mu Chapter at FIU is held each spring semester.

Section II: Policies and Procedures

This section describes the policies and procedures of the Occupational Therapy Department, the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and the University Graduate School related to student retention, program progression, and program completion. Students may access FIU Graduate School policies and procedures at: <http://gradschool.fiu.edu/>

2.1 Requirements for Program Completion

The Professional Master of Science in Occupational Therapy curriculum is designed to be completed in seven semesters on a full-time basis, including all clinical fieldwork requirements. All fieldwork must be completed within 24 months following completion of the didactic portion of the program.

Transfer Credits

According to Graduate School policy, a maximum of 16 credits of graduate coursework earned at another institution, or 20% of the total required coursework, may be accepted for transfer, subject to approval by the Department Chair. Additional information is available in the [Transfer Credit Policy](#).

Progression

The following circumstances may affect a student's progression in the program and may result in delays in program completion, graduation, and credentialing. **Section 2.3** provides additional policies related to student retention:

- Failure of required professional curriculum courses, including fieldwork.
- Failure to maintain the academic standards required by the Occupational Therapy Department and the University Graduate School.
- Academic warning, probation, or dismissal in accordance with University Graduate School policy.
- Disciplinary action or dismissal by the Department or University.
- Withdrawal from the program.
- Failure to make satisfactory progress toward degree completion.

Graduate students must maintain a minimum graduate GPA of **3.0 to remain in good academic standing**. Students whose cumulative graduate GPA falls below 3.0 are subject to academic warning, probation, and, when applicable, dismissal in accordance with FIU Graduate Academic Standing Policy.

Eligibility for Graduation

To be eligible for graduation, students must:

- Satisfactorily complete all didactic and fieldwork requirements within established program guidelines.

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- Maintain a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0.
- Meet all University and program requirements for degree completion.
- Meet University deadlines and requirements for graduation.

2.2 Faculty Advisors

Upon admission, each student will be assigned a faculty advisor for their professional coursework. Students are required to participate in an advising meeting at least once each semester to review their academic progression and Professional Development Plan (PDP). The advising meeting may be conducted by the student's assigned faculty advisor or another designated faculty member, as appropriate. Additional advising sessions are available during faculty members' regular office hours or by appointment to discuss academic or clinical performance, questions or concerns related to the Occupational Therapy program, or other matters related to the student's educational experience. Faculty may also request meeting with a student as needed.

A conference form will be completed following advising meetings, as appropriate, to document the discussion, recommendations, and any required follow-up. Students may be asked to sign the conference form to acknowledge that the meeting and its content have been documented. Faculty advisors do not provide personal counseling services; however, they may refer students to appropriate University resources when personal counseling or additional support is needed.

It is Department policy that faculty meet individually with students when requested by the student. Spouses, parents, significant others, or other individuals may not participate in these meetings unless their participation has been discussed with and approved by the faculty member in advance.

The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) is primarily responsible for coordinating fieldwork placements and assigning students to fieldwork sites. Students receive advising and support throughout their Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences from the AFWC and/or designated faculty, as appropriate. Fieldwork advising and relevant student progress are documented in accordance with Department and program requirements.

2.2.1 Student Concerns

The Occupational Therapy Department is committed to addressing student concerns in a timely, professional, and appropriate manner. Students are encouraged to communicate concerns early and to use the appropriate Department, College, or University process based on the nature of the concern.

When a student has a concern related to a specific course, the student should first communicate directly with the course instructor. If the concern is not resolved, the student may proceed through the following communication structure, as appropriate:

1. Course instructor, when the concern relates to a specific course.
2. Faculty advisor or other appropriate faculty member.
3. Department Chair.

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4. Dean of the College or designee.

Students are expected to provide each individual or administrative level a reasonable opportunity to address the concern before proceeding to the next level.

If a concern constitutes a formal academic grievance involving a course, instructor, grade, or other academic matter subject to an established grievance procedure, the student must follow the applicable [grievance process](#).

For concerns that are not related to a specific course and do not constitute a formal grievance, students may consult with their faculty advisor, another appropriate faculty member, or the Department Chair.

When a concern represents a broader class or program matter affecting multiple students, the elected SOTA class representative may communicate the concern through the appropriate Department channels on behalf of the class.

Concerns requiring formal Department review should be submitted in writing to ensure that the nature of the concern and any subsequent actions are appropriately documented. The Department will review concerns in accordance with applicable Department, College, and University policies and maintain documentation as appropriate. If a student has a concern that cannot be appropriately addressed within the Department, the student should follow the applicable procedures available through the [Student Academic Affairs website](#). Concerns involving the behavior of another FIU student may be submitted through the University's [Student Academic Affairs Incident Reporting Form](#).

2.3 Retention

2.3.1. Academic Standing and Retention

Graduate students are required by the University to maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher to remain in good academic standing.

A graduate student whose cumulative graduate GPA falls below 3.0 for the first time in a given semester will be placed on academic warning. If the student's cumulative graduate GPA falls below 3.0 for a second semester, the student will be placed on academic probation. A student on academic probation whose cumulative and semester GPAs fall below 3.0 for a third semester will be automatically dismissed from the program and the University. The terms resulting in academic warning, probation, and dismissal are not required to be consecutive. The policy can be reviewed [here](#).

2.3.1 Good Standing:

To achieve and maintain good academic standing, students must maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher and earn a minimum grade of C+ (77%) in all required occupational therapy courses.

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2.3.2 Progression in the OT MS Program:

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher in required occupational therapy graduate coursework and earn a minimum grade of C+ (77%) in all required occupational therapy courses.

If a student earns a grade below C+ in any required occupational therapy course, the course must be repeated, and the student must earn a grade of B or higher in the repeated course. If the course is a prerequisite for a subsequent course, the student will not be permitted to enroll in the subsequent course until the prerequisite requirement has been successfully completed.

Only one course repeat is permitted during the program. A student who earns a grade below C+ in more than one required occupational therapy course will be dismissed from the Occupational Therapy program.

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher in required occupational therapy didactic coursework during semesters one through four. If a student's cumulative GPA in required occupational therapy coursework is below 3.0 for a third semester, the student will be dismissed from the Occupational Therapy program. The semesters in which the cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 do not need to be consecutive.

A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is required to progress to semesters five and six and enroll in OTH 5845 and OTH 5846 (Level II Fieldwork courses).

Graduation Requirements

To be eligible for graduation the students must:

- Meet all University Graduate School requirements for graduation.
- Satisfactorily complete all didactic and fieldwork requirements within OT degree program guidelines.

2.3.3 Academic Failure:

If a student earns a grade below C+ (77%) in any required occupational therapy course, the course must be repeated, and the student must earn a grade of B or higher in the repeated course. A student who earns a grade below C+ (77%) in more than one required occupational therapy course will be dismissed from the Occupational Therapy program. The Occupational Therapy Department uses the following grading scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade points per credit hours
A	93 – 100	4.00
A-	90 – 92	3.67
B+	87 – 89	3.33
B	83 – 86	3.00
B-	80 – 82	2.67
C+	77 – 79 (PASSING LEVEL)	2.33
C	73 – 76	2.00
D	60 – 72	1.00
F	0 – 59	0.00

PASS/FAIL GRADES

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade points per credit hours
P	77-100	N/A
F	0-76	N/A

2.3.4 Academic Dismissal:

A student may be dismissed from the Occupational Therapy program for failure to meet established academic progression, professional conduct, or other program requirements. Grounds for dismissal include:

- Two academic failures in required occupational therapy courses, as defined in Section 2.3.4.
- Failure to meet the cumulative GPA requirements for continued progression in the Occupational Therapy program, including a cumulative GPA below 3.0 in required occupational therapy coursework for a third semester. The semesters do not need to be consecutive.

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- Violation of applicable standards of student conduct or professional behavior resulting in dismissal from the program.

Students may also be subject to University academic warning, probation, or dismissal in accordance with the [FIU Graduate Academic Standing, Academic Dismissal and Readmission Policy](#).

If a student is dismissed from the Occupational Therapy program, the student will meet with the Department Chair and receive written notification of the dismissal. A copy of the dismissal notification will be maintained in the student's Department academic file. A student may appeal an academic grade in accordance with the applicable NWCNHS academic grievance process. Dismissal from the Occupational Therapy program does not necessarily constitute dismissal from Florida International University. A student dismissed from the Occupational Therapy program may explore eligibility for other academic programs at FIU or opportunities at another institution, subject to applicable admission and University requirements.

2.3.5 Re-Admission:

Criteria for consideration of students seeking re-admission to the Occupational Therapy program following withdrawal or dismissal. Re-admission to the Occupational Therapy program following withdrawal or dismissal is not automatic. Students seeking to return to the program must satisfy applicable University and Occupational Therapy program requirements in effect at the time of application.

A student who has been academically dismissed must comply with the University Graduate School requirements governing re-admission. In accordance with University policy, at least one academic year must elapse following academic dismissal before an application for re-admission will be accepted for consideration. Re-admission criteria include consideration of the student's previous graduate-level academic performance in addition to the admission requirements in effect at the time of re-application. Individuals seeking re-admission to the Occupational Therapy program must reapply through the Occupational Therapy Centralized Application Service (OTCAS) by the applicable program application deadline.

The Occupational Therapy Admissions Committee will consider the applicant's previous academic performance, the circumstances related to the dismissal or withdrawal, evidence of reflection and remediation, readiness to return to the program, and the applicant's plan for successful progression. Applicants seeking re-admission will be considered in relation to the applicant pool for the applicable admission cycle. Meeting the minimum requirements for consideration does not guarantee re-admission.

2.3.6 Curriculum Sequence Disruption:

Students who experience an academic failure, are academically dismissed, or withdraw from the program and subsequently re-enter the Occupational Therapy program will be provided with a revised plan of program progression.

Students must repeat and successfully complete any required course that was failed or not completed before progressing to subsequent coursework for which that course is a prerequisite. Students may not enroll in courses for which they have not satisfied the established prerequisites.

2.3.7 Leave of Absence:

Students who experience extenuating circumstances that affect course attendance for a period greater than one month must communicate with the Occupational Therapy faculty and Department Chair. Individual circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine the appropriate course of action in accordance with Department, College, and University policies.

As stated in University Graduate School policy, a student who finds it necessary to be excused from registration in a graduate program for one term must formally request a leave of absence from the graduate program. A leave of absence must be requested prior to the beginning of the anticipated leave and must be approved by the Occupational Therapy Department Chair, the Dean of the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and the Dean of the University Graduate School.

A leave of absence will generally be granted in circumstances involving personal hardship or family needs. Academic standing is not considered a basis for granting a leave of absence.

2.3.8 Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences

Student Grievance/Appeal Procedure

NWCNHS students have the right to appeal decisions related to grading, course requirements, program progression, and dismissal. Students who wish to appeal must first follow the applicable NWCNHS grievance and appeal procedures before pursuing additional University-level review, as applicable. For additional information regarding the grievance and appeal process, students should refer to the applicable [grievance policy](#).

2.4 Integrity and Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity in all academic work and to comply with the University's academic integrity requirements, the Student Conduct and Honor Code, and any additional requirements established in individual course syllabi or assignments. All work borrowed or derived, directly or indirectly, from another source must be appropriately cited and acknowledged.

Unauthorized collaboration, failure to appropriately acknowledge sources, or presenting another person's work as one's own may constitute plagiarism or another form of academic misconduct. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools or AI-generated content must comply with the requirements established by the course instructor and the specific assignment. Students may not use AI-generated content when such use is prohibited, nor may they submit AI-generated content as their own work without appropriate authorization. Students who are uncertain whether use of AI is permitted for a particular assignment are responsible for seeking clarification from the instructor before submitting the work.

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic and professional integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of AI, and other forms of academic misconduct are serious offenses and may be referred to the appropriate University office in accordance with FIU policies and the Student Conduct and Honor Code. Students are responsible for becoming familiar with and complying with applicable University, Department, and course-specific academic integrity requirements.

For additional information, students should refer to [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity | Division of Academic & Student Affairs | Florida International University \(fiu.edu\)](#).

Academic Misconduct

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellence in teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students are expected to respect the rights of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and to demonstrate the quality of their learning honestly. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of Florida International University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook. Students who plagiarize or cheat can be charged with academic misconduct. Penalties for academic misconduct can include up to dismissal from the University.

Students should review the [2025 Student Conduct and Honor Code](#) for additional information regarding academic misconduct, procedures, and sanctions.

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2.5 Guidelines for Exams

When examinations are administered, students are required to store all personal belongings and unauthorized materials, including, but not limited to, books, notes, bags, hats and caps, cellular phones, watches (including digital, analog, and smartwatches), and electronic, recording, listening, scanning, or photographic devices. All cellular phones and electronic devices **MUST** be placed in silent mode, not vibration, and stored as directed by the course instructor. Students may not use or access cellular phones or other unauthorized electronic devices during an examination or during examination breaks. The use of electronic devices to access, transmit, receive, record, or photograph information during an examination is prohibited. If you are seen using or accessing any of these electronic devices, your device will be inspected and confiscated. Failure to comply with examination procedures may result in a referral for Academic Misconduct in accordance with university policy.

Individual instructors may establish additional examination procedures and requirements for their courses. In the case of taking exams remotely, students must be prepared to complete the examination using the required online platform and any applicable security or proctoring measures specified by the instructor.

2.6 Professional Behavior:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors consistent with the expectations of occupational therapy practice. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, arriving to class on time, remaining for the duration of the session, notifying the instructor prior to an absence, demonstrating active listening, participating in class discussions, seeking clarification when needed, and demonstrating respect for instructors, classmates, and the learning environment, by **not** using email, social media, and text messaging during class sessions.

Students are required to purchase a minimum of 1 navy blue polo shirt embroidered with the FIU OT logo. The polos shirts are sold by Pi Theta Epsilon (PTE). The dress code is navy-blue FIU OT polo shirt, pants (no jeans), and closed toed shoes. The dress code will be enforced for designated class activities, clinical competencies, guest visits, site visits, field trips, and other activities as specified by the Department or course instructor.

Use of Laptops and Other Technology

The use of electronic technology in the classroom is limited to note-taking and activities that support learning related to the course content under discussion. Laptops and other electronic devices may not be used during class to check email, browse the internet, send text messages, complete assignments for other courses, or engage in other non-course-related activities. The use of laptops and other electronic devices during class is at the discretion of the instructor.

2.7 Online Courses:

Some occupational therapy courses may be offered in on-line and/or hybrid formats.

In the event that the University is exercising remote learning practices, students are expected to participate in required online learning activities, including synchronous video conferencing, as scheduled. Students should be prepared to participate in required academic activities consistent with the expectations and workload of the full-time Occupational Therapy program.

Classes may include a combination of online and in-person lectures, discussions, laboratory, clinical activities, and various testing methods including video proctoring of online exams.

Essential tasks:

Students are expected to:

- Maintain personal appearance and hygiene appropriate for classroom, virtual, laboratory, and clinical settings, including adherence to applicable professional dress requirements.
- Maintain access to an appropriate environment for video conferencing, virtual fieldwork activities, and remote examination monitoring, as required.

2.8 Program Policies on Written Work:

The Occupational Therapy faculty have established the following expectations for written assignments. These expectations apply to all Occupational Therapy courses:

1. Assignments designated by the instructor must be submitted in typed format. Instructors may refuse to accept handwritten assignments unless otherwise specified.
2. Grades on written assignments may be reduced by up to one letter grade or 10% of the numerical grade, as determined by the instructor, for deficiencies including:
 - Spelling errors
 - Poor sentence structure
 - Grammatical errors
 - Poor organization
 - Redundancy
 - Inappropriate use of technical terminology
 - Typographical errors
 - Unprofessional or unclear corrections
 - Failure to adequately proofread written work

The style of organization and referencing which is required for all papers written in this program is the **American Psychological Association (APA) Style Manual (7th edition)**. It is available in the campus bookstore.

Students who have problems with writing or are unsure of their grammar or spelling should make full use of the services at the [Writing Center](#) and the [Center for Academic Success](#).

Section III: Fieldwork

3.0 Students must satisfactorily complete all Level I and Level II fieldwork placements and associated assignments. Policies and procedures governing fieldwork education are outlined in the **Student Fieldwork Handbook**, available on the Occupational Therapy Department website. Students are responsible for reviewing and complying with all applicable policies, procedures, and requirements contained in the [Student Fieldwork Handbook](#).

3.1 Students are required to attend all scheduled fieldwork meetings. If a student is unable to attend a required fieldwork meeting, it is the student's responsibility to personally notify the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC). Students will be eligible to participate in fieldwork only if they are in good academic standing and meet all applicable program and fieldwork requirements. Students must successfully complete all required didactic coursework prior to beginning their Level II fieldwork experience.

3.1.1 Students will be placed in fieldwork only after all required fieldwork and clinical site requirements have been completed by the established deadlines. Requirements may include, but are not limited to, health and immunization documentation, background screening, and required forms. Failure to complete or submit required documentation by the established deadlines may jeopardize a fieldwork placement and delay progression in the program and graduation. Fieldwork sites may establish health and immunization requirements, which may include documentation of current vaccinations, such as influenza and COVID-19 vaccines. Students are responsible for complying with all requirements established by their assigned fieldwork site. In the case that an OT student is placed in a setting that requires a vaccine, the OT Department will abide by clinical site's exemption protocols. Students on fieldwork are expected to comply with all requirements that are mandated by the fieldwork site. In some cases, clinical sites allow a medical exemption. If a student is unable to meet the requirements of an assigned fieldwork site, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) will attempt to identify an alternative placement, when available and appropriate. If the AFWC is not able to find a placement, it may delay the student's progression in the program until an alternative fieldwork site can be secured.

3.1.2 Students must meet the demands of the program and possess the abilities reflected in the Student Performance Standards (SPS) (see Appendix II) with or without accommodation for successful completion of degree requirements.

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3.1.3 Accommodations:

Students with disabilities, registered with the [Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#), that may affect their clinical performance may request reasonable accommodation for clinical placements.

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) staff are available to collaborate with you in achieving your next academic milestone. The DRC can assist in your planning by meeting with you and reviewing which accommodations you are eligible for and if they are available in the various environments you will encounter during this phase of your training. **It is important to note that the accommodations which you were previously qualified and eligible for, and received in the classroom setting, will be reviewed and subject to change due to the training and preparation requirements of the applied knowledge educational environment.** Please note you will still be able to use your accommodations in any non-applied knowledge experiences as you typically would during this phase of your education. Refer to this [website](#) for more information.

Students must be eligible under the definitions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in order to request accommodation. Students requesting accommodation should contact the fieldwork coordinator prior to placement. It is highly recommended students disclose a disability prior to starting fieldwork. The fieldwork coordinator will work with students requiring accommodation to provide the student equal opportunities in fieldwork while meeting their individual needs. Students who neglect to do so may find that the site cannot accommodate their needs at the last minute.

3.1.4 Students must follow facility/ FIU dress code requirements.

3.1.5 Students must conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner at all times and abide by the current AOTA Code of Ethics.

3.1.6 Drug Testing/Criminal Background Checks:

Fieldwork facilities may require drug testing or a current (within a year) criminal background check prior to clinical affiliation. Students will be required to cover any costs associated with these requirements.

3.1.7 Withdrawal or Termination of Fieldwork Due to Inadequate Performance:

Students who withdraw from an internship or are asked to withdraw due to inadequate performance will receive a failing grade for that fieldwork. Inadequate performance may include unprofessional workplace behaviors, poor skill performance, poor clinical judgment, and any behaviors that put a patient/client at safety risk. There is no credit for partial time served in an internship that must be terminated due to inadequate performance. Students who fail an internship may repeat one and only one internship. Students who fail two clinical internships will be dismissed from the program. Students who have not completed six months of Level II fieldwork will not be eligible to receive their master's degree in occupational therapy. Students must complete all Level II Fieldwork within 24 months of the completion of didactic coursework.

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Students who withdraw from fieldwork due to illness are required to provide a physician's statement indicating the student's ability to resume full duties before being rescheduled for a clinical internship.

Any student who fails or withdraws from a clinical internship loses the right to choose clinical placement sites. For level II fieldwork, students will be placed a maximum of three (3) times for clinical sites. The student will be required to meet with the academic fieldwork coordinator and may be required to sign a contractual letter regarding responsibilities for subsequent clinical placements. Credit for time served will NOT be granted. Students who withdraw or are withdrawn from a scheduled fieldwork are not eligible to start another fieldwork until the next scheduled rotation. Students who marginally pass may be required to complete additional fieldwork.

A student who is having difficulty during fieldwork should attempt to discuss the issues with the supervisor and should immediately contact the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC). The AFWC will discuss options for a successful continuation and completion of fieldwork. For specific information regarding fieldwork please refer to the Fieldwork Handbook.

3.2 Preparation for NBCOT National Certification Review Course:

The OT Program provides multiple resources to help prepare students for the NBCOT exam. Some examples include course exams with multiple choice questions that follow the NBCOT question format, a seminar review course, practice exam, support materials, review courses. Some of these supports may be integrated into specific courses, including Level II FW.

APPENDIX I

STUDENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Successful participation and completion of the Occupational Therapy Program requires that the student be able to consistently meet the demands of the program. Occupational therapy students must be able to perform academically in a safe, reliable, and efficient manner in classrooms, laboratories, and clinical situations. At all times, the student must demonstrate behavior, skills, and abilities in compliance with legal and ethical standards as set forth by the AOTA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

Students acquire the foundation of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors needed throughout the program. Those abilities that the student must possess and be able to demonstrate 100% of the time to practice safely are reflected in the standards that follow.

Occupational therapy students must always, be able to meet these minimum standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, for successful completion of degree requirements. These are the minimum standards; however, some placements may require a higher level of performance.

Student Performance Standard (Student must meet minimum requirement 100% of the time)		Examples
Critical Thinking	Demonstrates critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment and problem solving.	- Applies critical thinking processes to work in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical experiences. - Exercises judgment in decision making abilities during class, laboratory and in clinical experiences. - Follows safety procedures established for each class, laboratory, and clinical experience. - Demonstrates the ability to self-evaluate. - Demonstrates the ability to identify problems and offer possible solutions.

Interpersonal	Demonstrates the ability to interact and relate to other people beyond giving and receiving instructions. Cooperates with others.	- Demonstrates interest in classmates, faculty, patients/clients. - Demonstrates the ability to get along with and cooperate with others. - Demonstrates the ability to listen to others - Demonstrates the ability to provide suggestions/ recommendations to others. - Demonstrates ability to maintain poise and flexibility in stressful or changing conditions. - Recognizes and responds appropriately to individuals of all ages, genders, races, socio-economic, religious, sexual preferences, and cultural backgrounds.
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Communication	Demonstrates the ability to communicate clearly with patients/clients, physicians, others health professionals, family members, significant others, care givers, community or professional groups and colleagues. Communication includes speech, language, nonverbal, reading, writing and computer literacy.	- Communicates effectively with classmates in simulated laboratory activities and situations for data collection, instruction, and intervention - Participates in group meetings to deliver and receive information and respond to questions from a variety of sources. - Reports clearly and legibly through progress notes in patient/clients charts, communicates with physicians and insurance providers including billing and order/referral forms. - Responds to patient calling or any other warning call and machine alarm. - Demonstrates skill in utilizing various computer programs to prepare assignments, presentations, and documentation as required in the classroom, laboratory and clinical environments.
Motor Skills	Demonstrates the ability to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general and emergency care and treatment to patients/clients.	- Moves around in classroom, laboratory, patient/client's room, therapy/treatment area. - Moves to and from departments to patient/client's rooms. - Provides patient/client safety and well-being in all therapeutic or transporting activities by utilizing proper body mechanics. - Exhibits sufficient manual dexterity to manipulate small and large equipment, provide support, assistance and resistance as needed for movement, exercise, data collection and interventions. - Knowledge of how to perform CPR

Hearing	Demonstrates functional use of hearing to monitor and assess health needs.	- Demonstrates ability to obtain and utilize information directly from instructors, fieldwork supervisors and classmates in lectures, laboratory simulations/ activities and clinical experiences. - Demonstrates ability to obtain appropriate medical history and data collection directly from the patient/client, caretaker and/or family member. - Responds to monitor alarms or cry for help and/or assistance.
Visual	Demonstrates visual acuity and perception sufficient for observation and assessment.	- Demonstrates ability to obtain and utilize information directly from lectures, and laboratory demonstrations/activities. - Demonstrates the ability to obtain and utilize information via observation from patients/clients, e.g. movement, posture, body mechanics, etc., necessary for comparison to normal standards for purposes of evaluation of performance and response to interventions. - Receives information from treatment environment.

Tactile	Demonstrates tactile abilities sufficient to gather assessment information and provide intervention.	- Demonstrates the ability to senses changes in an individual's muscle tone, muscle strength, skin quality, joint mobility, kinesthesia, and temperature. - Demonstrates the ability to gather accurate objective evaluative information via tactile abilities in a timely manner. - Demonstrates the ability to obtain and utilize information about an individual via tactile abilities during treatment activities.
Self-Care	Maintains general good health and self-care in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with whom one interacts in the academic and clinical setting.	- Maintains hygiene while in lectures, laboratory experiences, and clinical experiences. - Demonstrates safety habits and work area neatness. - Understands components of a healthy lifestyle. - Meets all health requirements of the OT Program.
Intellectual Abilities	Demonstrates the ability to read, write, speak, and understand English at a level consistent with successful course completion and development of a positive patient-student relationship.	- Demonstrates ability to comprehend and follow verbal and written instructions. - Consistently meets course requirements of all courses in the OT Program, passing courses with a grade of "C+" or better. - Can learn to reconcile conflicting information - Written communication: Demonstrates ability to use proper punctuation, grammar, spelling. Completed work is neat and legible.
Commitment to Learning	Demonstrates a positive attitude towards decision-making, policies and	- Completes readings, assignments, and other activities outside of class hours.

	operating methods, rules, etc.	- Demonstrates initiative, motivation and enthusiasm related to course requirements. - Demonstrates ability to complete all work without evidence of cheating or plagiarism. - Attends all lectures/ laboratory/clinical assignments as assigned. - Is consistently punctual to all class, laboratory, and clinical assignments.
Affective Learning Skills (behavioral & social attitudes)	Demonstrate appropriate affective behaviors and mental attitudes in order not to jeopardize the emotional, physical, mental, and behavioral safety of clients and other individuals with whom one interacts in the academic and clinical setting. Acknowledges and respects individual values and opinions in order to foster harmonious working relationships with colleagues, peers and patients/clients.	- Demonstrates ability to sustain the mental and emotional rigors of a demanding educational program, which includes an academic and clinical component, that occur within set time constraints. - Demonstrates willingness to accept challenges. - Open to feedback. - Listens actively. - Follows guidelines and rules for the program and university.

(Adapted from D. Chasanoff, MEd., 2007, Manatee Community College, FLOTEC)

If a student cannot demonstrate the minimum skills and abilities identified above 100% of the time, it is the responsibility of the student to request appropriate accommodation. FIU will provide reasonable accommodation if it does not fundamentally alter the nature of the program offered and does not impose an undue hardship such as those that cause a significant expense, difficulty or are unduly disruptive to the educational process. Everyone's safety (students, clients, family members & team) is paramount. For a student to receive reasonable accommodation, they must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC).

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