University of Nebraska Medical Center℠

COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Occupational Therapy Program
Student Handbook
Entering Class of 2023

Welcome

Welcome to the Occupational Therapy (OT) Program in the Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). We are pleased to join you on your journey toward becoming an occupational therapist.

This handbook is designed to supply information about the OT Program as a supplement to the UNMC Student Policies and Procedures, CAHP Handbook, University Catalog, UNMC website, and Program course syllabi. All UNMC students are expected to follow the policies and procedures established by the University, College, and Program. Be familiar with the contents of each of the resources. Keep the websites and handbooks bookmarked on your computer as useful resources. All students, regardless of their year of enrollment, are responsible for knowing and abiding by policies specific to the Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) Program shown within the Handbook.

You will receive more information about professional behavior, Level I Fieldwork, Level II Fieldwork, and Doctoral Capstone as you move forward in the program. Handbooks are published to provide a readily available source of information for students, faculty, and staff. The documents are subject to additions, deletions and other revisions as deemed necessary by the University, College, or Program. Changes may be made without advance notice. Updates are made available through the website and the learning management system (Canvas), with notification via University email.

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SECTION 1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The curriculum for the entry-level Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) within the Occupational Therapy Program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) reflects the mission of the University, the philosophy of the profession, the beliefs and values of the faculty, and the needs of our graduate students.

Program History

The Occupational Therapy Program is part of the Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP), University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). The College of Allied Health Professions is home to 15 health profession education programs. In 2016 UNMC opened a second campus to support rural workforce development located 185 miles from the main campus and the urban corridor of the state. Five allied health professions programs provide synchronous and asynchronous hybrid education, with core and adjunct faculty members actively engaged on both campuses. The University of Nebraska Board of Regents approved an OTD Program in October 2017. The first program director was hired in 2018. The first class of students was accepted in 2021 and is expected to graduate in 2024. We offer one program to one cohort across two campuses. Students choose a campus for the duration of their education based on personal preference for their on-campus lab and community experiences. UNMC offers an integrated educational program, a blend of in-person hands-on active learning, simulation, experiential learning, lab competencies, and distance components. Graduating students receive a Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree.

Accreditation

The entry-level OTD Program (Program) has received Preaccreditation status with the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®), part of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA): 301-652-2682, weblink, or ACOTE c/o Accreditation Department, American Occupational Therapy Association, 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200 North Bethesda, MD 20852-4929. The Higher Learning Commission the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools also accredit UNMC programs.

Occupational Therapy Program Mission and Philosophy

UNMC Occupational Therapy Education Division Mission

The mission of the Occupational Therapy Education Division is to advance health through meaningful participation in everyday living for all people and communities.

UNMC/Nebraska Medicine Mission

We are Nebraska Medicine & UNMC. Our mission is to lead the world in transforming lives to create a healthy future for all individuals and communities through premier educational programs, innovative research and extraordinary patient care.

UNMC College of Allied Health Professions Mission

The mission of the College of Allied Health Professions is to advance health by:

- Delivering allied health educational programs that prepare graduates to provide high quality, evidence-based, safe care for all patients;
- Conducting scholarly activities that create and disseminate knowledge reflective of the unique contributions of allied health theory and practice;
- Providing high quality, contemporary clinical care in the allied health disciplines; and
- Providing outreach to underserved populations.

Fundamental beliefs about humans and how they learn

Our program is consistent with the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Philosophic Base of Occupational Therapy (AOTA, 2017) and Philosophy of Occupational Therapy Education (AOTA, 2018). The UNMC Occupational Therapy Program facilitates learning as a meaningful occupation for students. Education enables students to become practitioners in occupational therapy for the benefit of individuals, groups, and populations. We incorporate active and integrative learning, collaborative processes, continuous self-evaluation and reflection, and lifelong learning.

Program philosophy statement

We believe in the pursuit of meaningful activity, life occupation, as a fundamental human right. We view learning as occupation for our students, necessary for doing, being, and becoming *doing + being, becoming and belonging = survival and health* (Wilcock, 2006, p. 220). We believe humans continue to change and grow throughout life through a complex integration of occupation and adaptation (Schkade, 1992).

We believe in occupation for health as the foundation of occupational science. We believe all people have an innate drive to do, to be occupied. We believe in applying occupation through occupational therapy as means and end for health and wellness. We believe the occupation of learning involves immersive tasks to adapt and grow. Immersive learning encompasses diverse interactive experiences; broad contexts; protracted engagement; and autonomy balanced with collaboration.

We believe personal and professional growth is an occupational process. We believe all people have an innate drive to become, to grow and change, unique to each person's beliefs and abilities. We believe the occupation of growth involves a repeated, immersive process of personal inward reflection, goal and strategy setting, implementation, and reassessment. We challenge learners to adapt and to model the process of growth for knowledge users.

We believe translational science can close the knowledge-to-practice gap to support one's community. We believe translation involves community engagement to identify real world challenges and collaborate for action. We believe all people have an innate drive to belong, to be part of a group, to contribute. We believe the profession has an obligation to community engagement and to return information to knowledge users.

Curricular foundation

Dewey - pragmatism

We ground the curriculum in Dewey's pragmatism as foundational to health and human service professions (1920). Pragmatism recognizes a complex interaction of person and environment to test hypotheses for active growth of the learner. The curriculum contains immersive, interactive, developmental teaching and learning to facilitate learner acquisition of skills, abilities, and attitudes. Dewey's pragmatic approach is echoed in Kuh's high impact practices (2008). High impact practices include learning communities, core curriculum, collaborative projects, community-based learning, signature assignments, capstone experiences, and projects.

Knowles and Mezirow – andragogy and transformation

We incorporate Knowles' adult learning, in which each person defines their needs, goals, resources, strategies, and means to assess outcomes (1984). The curriculum encourages adult learners to build on prior knowledge, applied to new circumstances. We believe the process of learning and making mistakes prompts change, as an occupational process. Mezirow posed that learners create new meaning from reevaluating their experiences (1991). Learning facilitates critical reflection about *content, process,* and *premise*. The curriculum intentionally provides challenges through a variety of practice-based learning activities, facilitating novice to expert ways of thinking and doing.

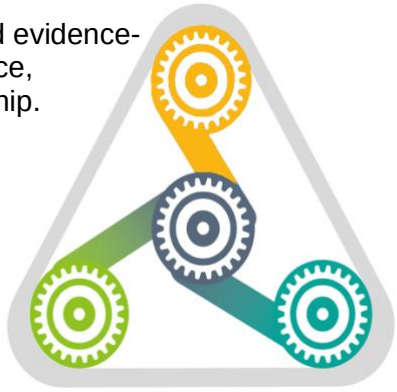
Schkade and Schultz – Occupational Adaptation

Learning and adaptation are intertwined. Schkade and Schultz (1992) described Occupational Adaptation as a theoretical frame of reference merging occupation and adaptation as one construct, describing a *normative process* through which human beings change. Occupation, in this instance the occupation of learning, provides the vehicle by which human beings respond to life challenges. Times of life transition create a press for mastery based on external demand and internal desire. OA is one model in the curriculum used to facilitate learner development of adaptive strategies to master occupational challenges.

Occupational Therapy Program Curricular Design

Occupation for Health

Application of occupation-based and evidence-based intervention for current practice, leadership, education, and scholarship.



Translational Science

Sharing knowledge *from* practice *for* practice to increase quality and effectiveness of services to improve health.

Personal & Professional Dev

Development of lifelong learners, demonstrating a commitment to professional standards and responsibilities.

Educational philosophy and philosophy of the profession are integrated into curricular design. Instruction is immersive and interactive (*pragmatism*), making full use of a variety of contexts for hybrid delivery. Learners complete assigned tasks and investigation prior to instructor-facilitated sessions, group problem solving, simulated patients, teaching technologies, and demonstration of competencies (*andragogy)*. Learners are asked to apply and share prior knowledge and experience about content, process, and premise to facilitate novice to expert ways of thinking and doing. Learners identify adaptive strategies for relative mastery of occupational challenges (*occupational adaptation*). Following self-exploration, learners are able to model adaptation for others.

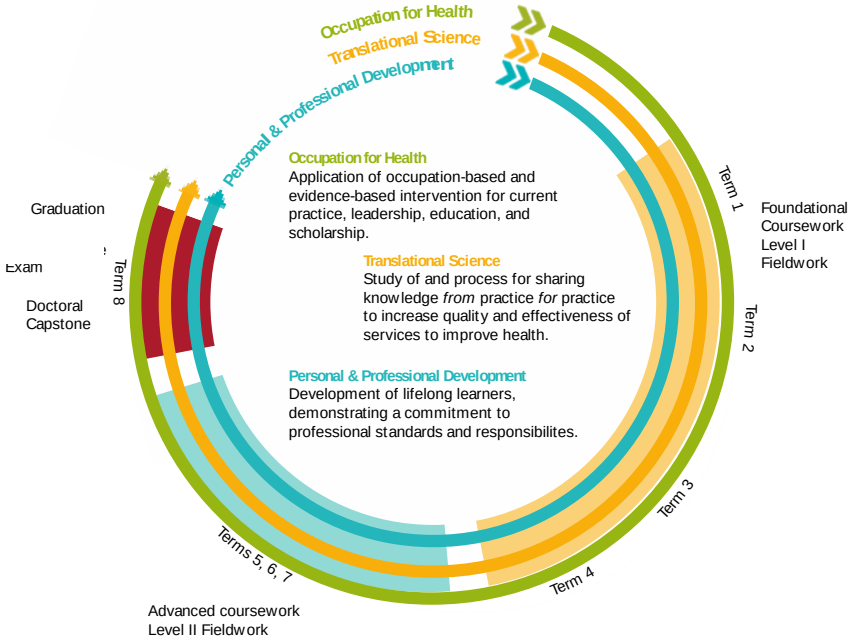
Instructional design is focused on transformative learning (Frenk, 2010). Instructional design methods are interdependent: no single design is sufficient to educate occupational therapy practitioners. Instructional design in the UNMC OTD curriculum integrates subject-centered, inquiry-centered, and learner-centered methods of learning to develop adaptive practitioners.

- Subject-centered learning is informative, providing core content relevant to current practice, enabling students to acquire knowledge of discipline-related theories, principles, and methods. Subject-centered learning focuses on *occupation for health.*
- Learner-centered learning is formative, promoting responsibility for self-reflection and self-direction, lifelong learning, and growth for the benefit of self and others. Learner-centered learning focuses on *personal and professional development.*
- Inquiry-centered learning is transformative, supporting strategies to frame and confront day-to-day challenges, facilitating novice to expert ways of thinking, and implementing solutions. Inquiry-centered learning focuses on *translational science.*

Occupational Therapy Curricular themes, threads, student learning outcomes
(Congruent with CAHP SLOs Adopted 7.10.19)

OTD Theme – Occupation for Health	
Application of occupation-based and evidence-based intervention for current practice, leadership, education, and scholarship.	
OTD Threads – CAHP/OTD Student Learning Outcomes	
Foundational Knowledge	Generalize foundational theories, principles, and methodologies to the execution of evidence-based clinical care, teaching, and research in one's profession.
Clinical Care	Demonstrate evidence-based knowledge of person-centered clinical care reflective of the professional standards in one's profession.
Healthcare & Education Systems	Approach clinical care, teaching, and research in a manner that is considerate of safety, efficiency, timeliness, sustainability, and ethical decision-making.
OTD Theme – Translational Science	
Study of and process for sharing knowledge *from* practice *for* practice to increase quality and effectiveness of services to improve health.	
OTD Threads – CAHP/OTD Student Learning Outcomes	
Translational Knowledge	Apply knowledge to complex problems to meet the evolving healthcare needs of individuals and communities through technology, invention, research, advocacy, and outreach.
Civic Responsibility	Engage in service, outreach, and advocacy opportunities for the advancement of patient care, patient safety, community health, and the allied health professions.
OTD Theme – Personal and Professional Development	
Development of lifelong learners, demonstrating a commitment to professional standards and responsibilities.	
OTD Threads – CAHP/OTD Student Learning Outcomes	
Personal & Professional Growth	Engage in lifelong learning and professional growth based on self-assessed limitations through the synthesis of reflective thought, feedback from others, and situational evaluation and analysis.
Cultural Agility	Exhibit culturally sensitive behaviors that contribute to a safe environment for all individuals and communities.
Interprofessional Teamwork	Embrace the unique roles and experiences of the various healthcare professions, promoting a team-based approach to healthcare, teaching, and research.
Communication & Collaboration	Cultivate an environment of collaboration by engaging in productive communication with all members of one's team.

Curricular themes and threads are incorporated into courses across the curriculum. Syllabi include overarching course goals for each theme (B.0. sample syllabus). Faculty are in the process of syllabus construction, mapping themes to threads to accreditation standards, student learning outcomes, learning activities, and outcomes assessments.



Course sequencing
Course sequence may be different for individual students. Current research suggests large cohorts contribute to high attrition (Bowyer, 2018). Split cohorts supports individualized instruction and distribute the burden across fieldwork sites. Semesters 1 – 4 are hybrid delivery with content via learning management system and in-person.

Semester 1 (Year 1 – Fall)
OCCT500 Occupational Foundations OCCT501 Structure & Function for Occupation OCCT502 Human Movement OCCT520 Integrative Practice 1

Semester 1. Semester 1 courses address foundational content, interprofessional collaboration, and an introduction to OTD curricular design. Students complete their first Objective Structured Competence Exams (OSCEs) and Standardized Patient Competence Exams (SPACE) in Semester 1, continuing through semester 4. A University required interprofessional seminar includes all health professions students during orientation week.

- Occupational Foundations addresses occupation, occupational science, history, ethics, theory, and application of *occupation for health*.
- Human Movement addresses skills client factors, performance skills, and contexts in an interprofessional course taken with physical therapy students.
- Structure and Function for Occupation addresses nervous system; spine, head, and neck; upper limb; and lower limb with an emphasis on screening, beginning therapeutic use of self, and case analysis applying *occupation for health*.
- Integrative Practice 1 is the first of a series of courses in which students learn to apply multiple skills. The first course provides an overview of the curricular design (didactic and clinical). We focus on transparency of themes, threads, learning activities, and outcomes assessments. Students complete self-assessment and well-being modules for *personal and professional development*. Students examine their own roles and patterns for health and wellness, reflecting on personal *occupation for health*. Integrative Practice introduces *translational science* as a professional responsibility.

Semester 2 (Year 1 – Spring)
OCCT532 Occupation-based Practice 3 OCCT540 Evidence-based Practice 1 OCCT521 Integrative Practice 2 OCCT550 Fieldwork 1A
Semester 3 (Year 1 – Summer)
OCCT531 Occupation-based Practice 2 OCCT541 Evidence-based Practice 2 OCCT522 Integrative Practice 3 OCCT551 Fieldwork 1B
Semester 4 (Year 2 – Fall)
OCCT530 Occupation-based Practice 1 OCCT642 Evidence-based Practice 3 OCCT623 Integrative Practice 4 OCCT510 Physical Agent Modalities OCCT552 Fieldwork 1C

Semesters 2, 3, and 4. Courses in Semesters 2, 3, and 4 are similar in design and structure. Each semester includes an Occupation-Based Practice course, an Evidence-Based Practice course, an Integrative Practice course, and an OBP-connected Level I Fieldwork.

- Occupational-based Practice (OBP) courses address *occupation for health* across the lifespan: OBP1 infants and children; OBP2 youth and young adult; OBP3 middle and older adults. We intentionally designed intensive courses with a lifespan approach based on the belief of humans as integrated beings. Courses focus on occupations for the age range, contexts (typical and emerging), remediation/ prevention/promotion, OT process for individuals, groups, and organizations using the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework. Cognitive, sensorimotor, and affective objectives increase in complexity across Semesters 2, 3, and 4.
- Integrative Practice (IP) courses 2, 3, and 4 support expansion of multiple skills used across all areas of practice. These include teamwork, communication, ethics, culture, health literacy, telehealth, etc. Students apply skills in Occupational-based Practice courses and Level I fieldwork. Students revise professional development plans within each Integrative Practice course, identifying goals and strategies for personal and professional development. Much work is case-based with increasing complexity both within a single semester and from one semester to the next. Cases are individual and population-based, adding complexity through confounding factors.
- Evidence-based Practice (EBP) courses 1, 2, and 3 provide skills for scholarship with connection to *knowledge translation* with application of *occupation for health*. Students carry out research skills in small groups with faculty mentors. EBP1 addresses skills for design, ethics, and knowledge translation. EBP2 continues research methods and methodology, knowledge, and application in practice-based projects, and effective intervention. EBP3 includes design and completion of a systematic review.
- Level I Fieldwork (A, B, and C) are a three-course sequence providing directed observation and participation in selected aspects of the occupational therapy process across a variety of settings and age ranges. Level I Fieldwork corresponds to concurrent enrollment in Occupation-based Practice, emphasizing application of *occupation for health* and *personal and professional development*.
- Physical Agent Modalities presents theory and application of selected physical agents, meeting the requirements of the state.

Semesters 5, 6, and 7. The cohort is split during Semesters 5, 6, and 7, based on Level II fieldwork availability. Students alternate Level II fieldwork placement with online coursework. This level of coursework also addresses all three curricular themes.

Cohort D	Cohort E	Cohort F
Semester 5 (Year 2 – Spring)		
OCCT650 Fieldwork 2A OCCT710 Doctoral Capstone 1: Design	OCCT700 Management, Admin & Policy OCCT701 Practitioner as Educator OCCT702 Emerging Practice & Advocacy OCCT710 Doctoral Capstone 1: Design	OCCT650 Fieldwork 2A OCCT710 Doctoral Capstone 1: Design
Semester 6 (Year 2 – Summer)		
OCCT700 Management, Admin & Policy OCCT701 Practitioner as Educator OCCT702 Emerging Practice & Advocacy OCCT711 Doctoral Capstone 2: Develop	OCCT650 Fieldwork 2A OCCT711 Doctoral Capstone 2: Develop	OCCT651 Fieldwork 2B OCCT711 Doctoral Capstone 2: Develop
Semester 7 (Year 3 – Fall)		
OCCT651 Fieldwork 2B OCCT712 Doctoral Capstone 3	OCCT651 Fieldwork 2B OCCT712 Doctoral Capstone 3	OCCT700 Management, Admin & Policy OCCT701 Practitioner as Educator OCCT702 Emerging Practice & Advocacy OCCT712 Doctoral Capstone 3

- Level II Fieldwork, IIA and IIB, provide in depth experience delivering occupational therapy services to clients in various practice settings, focusing on purposeful and meaningful occupation, application of occupation-based research, administration, and management of occupational therapy services.
- Management & Policy addresses management and administration across a range of contexts to include contemporary social, political, and legal issues impacting practitioner, consultant, and entrepreneur roles.
- Emerging Practice & Advocacy addresses program development and implementation of community-based practice for groups, communities, and populations.
- Practitioner as Educator addresses educational theory, tools, technology, and effective strategies to develop optimal learning for individuals and communities, applying the principles of instructional design, teaching, and learning in preparation for work in an academic setting.
- The doctoral capstone (DC) series crosses Semesters 5, 6, 7, and 8. DC 1 Design; DC 2 Develop, and DC 3 Collaborate support the creation of the doctoral experience and project. The series supports alignment with community needs and faculty scholarly agendas, collaboration with stakeholders, and finalizing contracts and professional development plans.

Semester 8 (Year 3 – Spring)
OCCT713 Doctoral Capstone 4: Implement OCCT714 Doctoral Capstone 5: Disseminate

Semester 8.
The final doctoral capstone courses support completion of the experience and project, including dissemination to the profession and to community stakeholders.

- DC4 Implement accounts for the doctoral experience and preparation of doctoral project in the community, in one or more areas of expertise.
- DC5 Disseminate accounts for translation from knowledge to practice the doctoral experience and capstone project, demonstrating scholarship, knowledge synthesis, and translation.

Evaluation Strategies
Student evaluation is created from backward design. First, we identify the performance expected of an entry-level practitioner, then identify learning activities and outcomes assessments that fit them across the curriculum as a whole and for individual courses. Evaluation strategies are primarily mid and higher taxonomic level skills typically used in practice. For example, evaluations focused on *occupation for health* (generally in Occupation-based Practice courses) include case studies, teaching plans, patient education materials, equipment ordering, completion of ADA or home assessments, patient or client assessment (bottom-up and top-down to reflect varying practice contexts), literature reviews incorporating assessment of the evidence for application to practice. Evaluations focused on *translational science* (generally in Evidence-based Practice courses, and third year Leadership, Education, and Emerging Practice courses) include knowledge translation plans, grants, and advocacy plans. Evaluations focused on *personal and professional development* (generally in Integrative Practice courses and third year Leadership, Education, and Emerging Practice courses) include peer critique, faculty/mentor/supervisor feedback, and professional development plans setting goals using occupational adaptation to identify adaptive strategies for relative mastery.

Student evaluation is formative, summative, and confirmative. Formative evaluation takes place when learners are still working on tasks or courses. Learning-in-process enables development of adaptive strategies. Summative evaluation takes place when tasks or courses are complete, such as objective structured clinical exams (OSCEs) or Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE). Summative evaluation should be a summary to showcase what has been learned. Confirmative evaluation comes in the form of the OT Knowledge Exam, NBCOT exam, employer surveys, etc. sometimes months and years following completion of didactic courses and graduation. Confirmative evaluation also provides business metrics connecting student evaluation to program evaluation.

Student evaluation is also connected to Kirkpatrick based educational outcome levels (Milota, 2019). Level 1 outcomes measure student reactions such as course surveys. Level 2 outcomes measure student attitudes, knowledge, and skills through pre and post-tests, OSCEs, demonstrations, written products, etc. Level 3 outcomes measure student behavioral change, particularly during fieldwork and capstone. Level 4 outcomes measure results that benefit organizational practices, patients, clients, and communities. Level 4 outcomes come from employer and alumni surveys, patient and stakeholder feedback. Each of these Levels may contribute to program evaluation, with Level 4 the most strongly connected to our responsibility in knowledge translation/*translational science*.

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SECTION 2. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Retention and progression
Students are expected to meet academic and professional standards for retention and progression in the program. Academic and professional standards include minimum grade requirements, academic integrity, professional behavior, and safety standards. Failure to comply with these standards may result in the student appearing before the Program Standards Review Committee and may be cause for dismissal. Students must meet Technical Standards and Essential Functions in four categories across academic and clinical settings to progress in and complete the OTD program to be eligible for graduation.

Academic standards
Successful completion of each course is a prerequisite for successful completion of the Program. A student who does not meet course requirements may be placed on academic probation. Graduation may be delayed or denied. A final grade of C (73%) or better (or pass) is required for each course, regardless of the Program, School, or College offering the course. Requirements include

- Overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or better in each semester
- Overall GPA of 2.5 or better cumulatively throughout the curriculum
- Students may retake no more than 2 courses in semesters 1-4 to progress in the program

Grading scale
Letter grades are assigned based on academic performance. The College grading scale is defined in the CAHP Handbook. Guidelines may vary between or within programs. Most courses offered through the OTD Program are graded according to the scale below; however, course coordinators/instructors have autonomy to publish their own scales in their respective syllabi.

A+ = 97.00-100.00	B+ = 87.00-89.99	C+ = 77.00-79.99	D+ = 67.00-69.99
A = 93.00-96.99	B = 83.00-86.99	C = 73.00-76.99	D = 63.00-66.99
A- = 90.00-92.99	B- = 80.00-82.99	C- = 70.00-72.99	D- = 60.00-62.99
			F = 00.00-59.99

Grade point averages
Grade point average is calculated with the following correlation.

Grade Points		Grade Points		Grade Points		Grade Points	
A+ (optional)	4.0	B+	3.33	C+	2.33	D+	1.33
A	4.0	B	3.0	C	2.00	D	1.00
A-	3.67	B-	2.67	C-	1.67	D-	0.67
						F	0.00
						Incomplete	0.00

Grades of pass/fail and incomplete are not included in GPA calculation. For repeated courses, the new grade replaces the previous grade in GPA calculation.

Incomplete grades
Students may receive a grade of Incomplete for a didactic course in which they have made satisfactory progress, but extenuating circumstances prevent completion by the end of the semester. The student and course instructor create an action plan for completion, which should be finalized by the end of the semester. The OT Program Standards Review Committee will review action plans. Without instructor approval, all missing course work will receive a score of zero. A grade of Incomplete cannot be used to remediate failing performance.

Instructors report Incomplete grades with the action plan. A student must remove the incomplete with a passing grade by the deadline specified in the plan but no later than 12 months. If the student does not satisfactorily complete the action plan, the grade is automatically converted to an F. The Program Standards Review committee may grant individual exceptions.

Personal SWOT
During program orientation, students complete an analysis of their personal Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) for success in the program. Students share their SWOT with their advisor at the start of the program. When a student performs below minimum standards or perceives a challenge to their success in a course, they may use their SWOT analysis as a tool to review and revise strategies to improve future performance. The student and course instructor may meet to create a learning contract.

Academic probation
A student may be placed on academic probation for

- failure of a course,
- incomplete course,
- failure of a Level II Fieldwork experience,
- an overall GPA below 2.5,
- a breach of academic integrity,
- a breach of professional conduct,
- non-adherence to safety standards, or
- non-adherence to the technical standards and essential functions.

Failing grades
Any grade less than a C (73%) or pass is considered a failing grade. Students who fail a course do not progress to the succeeding semester of the program. Students receiving a failing grade in any curriculum course must meet with the Program Standards Review Committee to develop an action plan. The Program Standards Review Committee identifies equivalency for the failed course. For equivalent courses, both course grades are calculated in the grade point average. Refer to the fieldwork education and capstone handbooks for all experiential education courses.

Action Plan
A student on academic probation must complete an action plan agreed on and signed by the student, advisor, and the chairperson of the Program Standards Review Committee or designee. Please refer to the UNMC Student Policies and Procedures and the CAHP Student Handbook for complete details. If the action plan is not successfully completed in the specified time frame, the student may be subject to further actions as recommended by the Program Standard Review Committee. If a student is placed on probation a second time during the program, the student will be dismissed unless there are compelling reasons for retention.

Withdrawal
Withdrawal constitutes a formal action initiated by the student to terminate academic standing within the program. Before requesting a withdrawal, the student should refer to the UNMC Student Handbook for information regarding tuition obligations. In addition, the student should visit the CAHP Office of Student Affairs and the UNMC Division of Student Success to discuss the effects of withdrawal on tuition and on any loans or scholarships for which the student has applied or has in place.

Termination of enrollment and dismissal
Dismissal is a final status mandated by failure to progress including unsatisfactory grades, a breach of academic integrity, a breach of professional conduct, or non-adherence to safety standards. If dismissed, the student should refer to the CAHP Student Handbook for a discussion of the appeals process and the UNMC Student Handbook for information regarding tuition obligations. In addition, the student should visit the Finance and Business Services Office and the Financial Aid Office to discuss the effects of dismissal on tuition, loans, and scholarships.

Academic integrity and professional conduct
Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with UNMC Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct policies, UNMC Code of Conduct, and the American Occupational Therapy Association Code of Ethics. Students represent UNMC, the Program, and the profession throughout their education and in day-to-day life. Professional behavior includes but is not limited to cheating, academic misconduct, research misconduct, dishonesty, fabrication, sharing of examinations (old or current), privacy violation, and plagiarism. Any violation of student standards or professional codes of ethics may be subject to disciplinary review.

Artificial Intelligence
The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in educational settings may be appropriate in some instances, however, students are prohibited from using AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) for any assignments that are part of the course grade unless the instructor has provided explicit permission to do so. When permitted, the student should properly cite the use of such tools using the citation convention specified by the instructor.

Timely completion of the OTD degree
Each student is expected to complete all coursework, fieldwork, and capstone within 150% of the typical program (up to 12 semesters), including any leaves of absence and/or remediation.

Leave of absence
A leave of absence may be requested by a student or may be required by the Director at the recommendation of the Program academic review committee. The student is responsible for initiating determination of the financial consequences of taking a leave of absence. Students should review financial arrangements with the CAHP Office of Academic Affairs, UNMC Office of Student Services, and the UNMC Office of Financial Aid.

Student requested leave of absence
Leaves of absence may be granted in accordance with the UNMC Leave Policy. They may include excessive delays in completing coursework due to health, personal, or family circumstances. Proper medical documentation is required.

Required leave of absence
A required leave of absence halts progression within the curriculum while maintaining a class position but does not excuse the student from any course requirements. The student must resume enrollment in the curriculum the following academic year at the start of the semester following the last semester successfully completed or may resume under the recommendation of the Program Academic Review Committee.

Returning from a leave of absence
At the time a required leave of absence is imposed, the Program Standards Review Committee may recommend or require that the student meet additional conditions prior to resuming enrollment in the program. Upon re-enrollment following a leave of absence, the student is subject to all rules and regulations which pertain to the class he or she is joining, and the student is required to complete the designated action plan which may include being placed on academic probation during the semester of return. For information regarding the students' responsibilities for notifying University and College officials of their leave and their return, please see the CAHP Student Handbook.

Students on a leave of absence are responsible for notifying the Occupational Therapy Program director in writing of their intention to return to classes. The written notification can be no later than the date specified by the Director. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the student's place in the class. Re-entry would require re-application through the usual admissions process of the program with no guarantee of re-admission.

Rights of appeal
Any student wishing to appeal a grade or the decision of faculty regarding their performance or right to continue in the program, may do so by following the UNMC Procedure for Appeals. Students should first try to resolve disagreements with the instructor and Program Director.

Credit for previous courses/Work experience/Transfer
No credit is offered for work experience or previous occupational therapy coursework. Students interested in transferring into the Occupational Therapy Program from another occupational therapy program under extenuating circumstances may do so at the discretion of the Occupational Therapy Program admissions committee. Admission decisions are contingent on qualifications, reason for transfer, and available openings in the program. Only students in current academic good standing are considered for transfer. Only graduate level courses taken within the past five years from a regionally accredited college or university are eligible for consideration of transfer credits. Only course marks with a minimum grade of B or better are eligible for transfer credits. Students interested in transferring must meet admission criteria of the program, complete an application, and an interview. Students interested in transferring must supply course syllabi and a portfolio of completed work for each course. The admissions committee considers qualifications according to current program admission standards, and reason for transfer. The admissions committee compares course syllabi standards and content with accreditation content standards and current curriculum design to be considered for transfer. Admission is not guaranteed.

Graduation
To graduate, students must meet the following requirements:

- Receive grades of C (73%) or better in each course within the curriculum;
- Maintain overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or better at the time of graduation;
- Pass all competency assessments, Level I and II Fieldwork, and Doctoral Capstone experiences;
- Consistently demonstrate professional and ethical conduct; and
- Discharge all indebtedness to the University of Nebraska

UNMC graduation ceremony
Attendance at the UNMC Graduation Ceremony is strongly encouraged. If a student will not attend, the student should notify the Occupational Therapy Program director and the Dean of the CAHP.

Convocation and CAHP hooding convocation ceremony
Attendance at the Convocation Ceremony during graduation week and the CAHP Hooding Convocation Ceremony is strongly encouraged. Family and friends of the graduating class are invited to attend. If a student will not attend, the student should notify the Occupational Therapy Program director and the Dean of the CAHP.

SECTION 3. EVALUATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The program uses a variety of methods to assess knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The Program faculty have identified signature assessments within each syllabus that must be completed satisfactorily to progress. Timing and content of assessments is at the discretion of the course instructor to meet the course objectives and accreditation Standards.

Learning Activities and Assignments
Learning activities and assignments support knowledge, skills, and attitudes focusing on key concepts in preparation for active learning and professional practice. They may include worksheets, reflections, written papers, projects, case studies, etc.

Exams and Quizzes
Examinations and quizzes assess knowledge. Some faculty may use an online secure system using specified software (i.e., ExamSoft, Examplify) or may be proctored. Students are required to have a computer compatible with the software. For minimum system requirements: www.examsoft.com/unmcah Students are responsible for keeping their device(s) exam-ready. An exam proctor may be directed to answer or not answer questions from students.

Course instructors establish exam procedures, clarifying expectations prior to the start. Students are responsible for completing exams according to course requirements. Course instructors identify policies that may include:

- Download availability
- One empty desk space between students, unless room space prohibits this distribution
- Keep eyes on their own exam in all testing situations
- All non-examination materials on the floor (e.g., books, bag, cap, phone, smart watch)
- Remain in the room during the examination

Skill competence assessments
Skill competence assessments (SCAs) and other lab exams support doing, including demonstrations of a sensory-motor skill according to a rubric.

Integrated examinations
Integrated examinations support demonstration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired across the curriculum according to a rubric. Integrated exams include content across the courses within a semester and build on course content from prior semesters. Integrated exams include objective structured competence examinations (OSCEs) and standardized patient competence examinations (SPACEs).

Experiential education
Students are evaluated during Level I Fieldwork, Level II Fieldwork, and Doctoral Capstone based on demonstration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired across the curriculum according to a rubric. Grades are based on information provided by the fieldwork educator, capstone mentor, the student, and the documentation contained in the evaluation. Students may repeat no more than one Level II Fieldwork experience.

SECTION 4. RESOURCES A to Z

Academic calendar
The Program provides schedules via Canvas with key dates. Schedules are also posted to the UNMC academic calendar website. Interprofessional courses have schedules that may differ from the UNMC academic calendar. Individual schedules for Level II Fieldwork and Doctoral Capstone may also differ from the UNMC academic calendar.

Accommodations
Students with a temporary or permanent disability communicate with the Accessibility Services Center (ASC) for reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). UNMC ASC, Student Life Center, Suite 2031; 402.554.2872; unmcasc@unmc.edu. If you have a disability but do not need accommodations, please consider disclosing your disability to the ASC. This would be helpful if there is a change in your health status such that you need accommodations in the future.

The process of requesting reasonable accommodations involves documenting a disability and completing the self-identification form. All requests are confidential; disclosures of the nature of your accommodations are made only on a need-to-know basis. Accommodations cannot be retroactive (i.e., accommodations can only support your future work) and ADA requests must be initiated by the student.

Request accommodations as soon as possible for the Program to meet your accommodation needs promptly (e.g., within the first two weeks of the semester if possible). If you develop a health condition or a disability that requires accommodations during the academic program, work with the ASC as soon as possible.

Admissions deferral
The Occupational Therapy Program considers requests for a deferral of admission for students with unforeseen or extraordinary extenuating circumstances. Deferral requests must be received in writing by June 1 of the year of planned entry. Requests for deferral may only be made by applicants who have been offered admission. Applicants with an alternate status are not considered for deferral.

Deferral requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. The Occupational Therapy Program Admissions Committee reviews all requests for final approval. Deferral decisions are made by June 15th. Students who are not granted a deferral must notify the Occupational Therapy Admissions Committee and Enrollment Management and Student Affairs of intent to remain enrolled or withdraw from the program no later than June 30th or they are unenrolled. The Occupational Therapy Program Admissions Committee offers open slots to applicants on the waiting list after that date.

Students granted a deferral are eligible to enter the program without reapplication in the year after the academic year for which they were admitted. Students who defer admission must confirm, in writing, their intent to matriculate by no later than February 1 of the year they will enter the program.

Advising
Advising related to coursework, professional behavior, fieldwork education, and doctoral capstone is the responsibility of the occupational therapy faculty and student. Each student is assigned an Occupational Therapy Program faculty member who serves as an advisor during their academic career at UNMC. In alignment with the curriculum design, faculty and students routinely assess and collaborate on professional development plans as part of advisement, coursework, fieldwork, capstone, and extracurricular opportunities. Advisors serve as contacts for student questions or concerns.

Students meet at least twice with their advisors during the first semester and once during subsequent semesters to review their professional behaviors, progress, and academic standing, including grade point average. Students also work with their faculty capstone mentor during semesters 5-8, meeting according to capstone course requirements. Students contact advisors to create advising appointments.

All-class and all-program meetings
To communicate essential information to students, class and program specific meetings may be scheduled throughout the academic year. Information is made available via Canvas for students unable to attend.

Attendance
Regular attendance is required for all classes, laboratory sessions, Level I Fieldwork, Level II Fieldwork, and Doctoral Capstone. If you are absent or tardy, send an email to each instructor with cc the OT Program Coordinator and your advisor prior to class. Excessive absences require a meeting with your advisor and may require a learning contract.

Class cancellation
Official University cancellation of class is announced via radio, television, social media, and alert system. Sign up for UNMC Alerts. The instructor of record makes the decision to cancel or convert to distance format, informing students via email or course learning management system (Canvas) posting. In case of a campus closure at one campus only, the following guidelines are in place:

- Lecture: Students on the closed campus are responsible for viewing the lecture via LiveStream or recording on Echo360.
- Lab: Lab sessions may be virtual or rescheduled.
- Written exams: Examinations scheduled for that day may be virtual or rescheduled.
- Rescheduled sessions may occur outside of regular (8:00-5:00) business hours based on availability of rooms and resources.

Classrooms/student laboratories
Occupational therapy students have access to Wittson Hall 4004 (Omaha), Bennett Hall 4016 (Omaha), and Health Science Education Complex (HSEC) 204 and 206 (Kearney) with their student identification badge. Students access Student Life Center (SLC rooms 1032, 1034, and 1041) in Omaha with their badge. Students may study in these rooms when they are not otherwise in use. Activity of Daily Living (ADL) spaces are accessed with faculty in attendance. Students wishing to use other rooms on either campus should contact the UNMC Central Room Scheduling Office at 402-559-7254. Reserve other HSEC rooms through the CAHP Administrative Assistant, 308-865-8324. Reserve other rooms on UNK campus via University Facilities, 308-865-8692.

Community resources

- Food pantry Omaha, Food pantry Kearney
- Pet food pantry Omaha
- Legal Aid of Nebraska
- WCA Women Against Violence program
- McGoogan Writing Center
- UNMC Gender and Sexuality Resource Center (inclusive of LGBTQ+ advocacy, pride alliances, and resources for survivors of sexual violence)
- Kearney Safe Center

Computer requirements

UNMC Occupational Therapy Program students are responsible for having a desktop, laptop, or tablet that meets specified requirements. This device should be equipped with a modern processor, sufficient system memory, anti-virus and anti-spyware software, and sufficient storage. A mobile telephone is not sufficient. Financial aid is available for students through the UNMC Financial Aid office to request funding for the device requirement. Refer to UNMC CAHP computer requirements for more information.

Copying and printing

Copy machines and printers are available for student use in the McGoogan Library and Michael Sorrell Center (Omaha) and Health Science Education Complex and Calvin T. Ryan Library (Kearney). Each fall and spring semester, each student's printing account is loaded with $25 to be used towards printing and copying. Funds roll over to subsequent semesters. Students may request a refund for unused printing account funds at the end of the program through an online submission. To add funds and for more information about printing, see the student printing website.

Copyrighted materials

Students, faculty, and staff are subject to federal laws and University policies governing copyrighted materials. Students may copy materials for their personal use. If students intend to share copied materials with others (in a class, for instance), they are subject to the "fair use" restrictions of copyright law. Review reproduction of copyrighted materials.

Distance learning

Adapted from Dr. C. A. Keller, San Antonio College

- **Get involved**. It is not enough to show up. Your voice must be heard to have a presence. Your comments are needed to add to the information, the shared learning, and the sense of community in each class.
- **Be persistent**. Each instructor sets the rules, and you need to abide by them; however, if you run into any difficulties, don't wait.
- Contact your instructor or post in the discussion forum. Most problems are easily solved, but your instructor and your fellow students need to hear from you before they can help.
- **Share tips, help, and questions**. For some people, taking distance courses is a new experience. There are no dumb questions, and even if you think your solution is obvious, please share it by posting it in the discussion forum. For every student who asks a question, there are 10 others wanting to know the same thing.

- **Think before you push send**. Did you say what you meant? How will the person on the other end interpret the words? While you can't predict all reactions, read over what you've written before you send it.
- **Consider \context**. Remember that we can't see the smile on your face when you make a sarcastic comment. We can't see the concern on your face if you have a terse response. We can't read your mind. Help us know your mind and position by explaining your ideas fully. Use rich language. Describe what you are thinking and feeling.

Dress code
All faculty, staff, and students are expected to maintain personal grooming and hygiene, with a neat, professional appearance in all educational activities. Plan attire suited to the occupation and the context in which the occupation takes place. Consider educational activities including reaching, bending, lifting, stooping, sitting, walking, standing, etc. Be mindful of safety issues for self and others including dangling clothing or accessories, scents, fingernail length, etc. Avoid displaying profanity, obscenity, or biases. Fieldwork, Doctoral Capstone, and other experiential sites may have additional dress code and appearance requirements. Name badges are required for community outings, practice placements, etc.

Email
In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), all students must use a University E-mail account while enrolled. Students are responsible for checking their UNMC email and the Learning Management System (Canvas) regularly.

In the subject line, explicitly name the topic, course in question, action needed, etc. Include your full name in a signature line so your instructor knows with whom they are communicating. Follow formal business etiquette when writing emails to the course coordinator, instructor, or guest lecturer. Use professional salutations or simply write the name of the person. When in doubt, it is best to use “Dr. X” or “Professor Y” instead of “Hey”.

Online courses are available 24 hours a day and offer flexibility for students and instructors. Neither you nor your instructor is expected to be available 24 hours a day. Instructors check email, voicemail, and Canvas messages regularly, but there may be times when they are unavailable due to other commitments and job responsibilities. You can expect your direct questions to be answered within 24-48 hours during weekdays. Like you, instructors need some down time and life balance. Evening and weekend responses are an exception, not the expected standard.

Employment
Enrollment in the occupational therapy program is a full-time responsibility, and employment during the academic year is not recommended. For students who do choose to be employed while enrolled in the program, academic activities and requirements must always take precedence over employment activities. The occupational therapy educational program does require occasional evening and/or Saturday classes and events.

Students who seek regular employment or volunteer in health or social services organizations must accurately represent their role. In those roles, an occupational therapy student:
- is acting as an independent agent, not as a representative of the University of Nebraska Medical Center;
- wears a UNMC nametag **only** when they are representing UNMC;

- is not covered by the University of Nebraska liability policy;
- may not sign occupational therapy notes.
- is not acting in an official role as an occupational therapy student; and
- may provide services only to the extent allowed by state statutes, rules, and regulations.

For further information on the legal definition and permissible roles for an occupational therapy aide, in Nebraska, refer to the State of Nebraska Statutes Relating to Occupational Therapy Practice Act, published by the Licensure and Credentialing Division of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

Equipment and space

Students receive education and instruction in the proper use and application of all equipment and spaces needed for patient examination or intervention as an occupational therapist. Students have access to labs and equipment following instructions in safe use.

Students may check out selected equipment for class-related activities with permission of the course instructor. Program office staff coordinate check-out and return of the equipment. All items checked out by a student must be returned before a student is cleared for graduation. All students are responsible for upkeep of all classroom/laboratory areas. No food or drink is to be left in any UNMC laboratory or lecture room. Please notify the instructor or program coordinator if equipment needs maintenance or repair.

Students are not allowed to bring guests (family or friends) into the laboratory space or to use equipment with/on guests. Non-student minor children are not allowed in the classroom regularly or present on campus except for officially sponsored programmatic activities with adult/guardian supervision. In an emergency, and if there are no other alternatives, a parent or care partner may have children present in the classroom for brief periods of time, provided the parent obtains the instructor's prior approval. Such arrangements are only to be temporary in nature and may be granted only in circumstances where the student and instructor have considered and satisfactorily addressed the exceptional circumstances. When authorized, a parent or legal guardian must supervise the child(ren) and should not leave such child(ren) in the custody of another University employee or student, even for brief periods of time.

Faculty treating students for occupational therapy services

Core and adjunct faculty and laboratory assistants within the Occupational Therapy Program are not allowed to provide occupational therapy services to current occupational therapy students during class time or outside of a formal clinical environment. If occupational therapy services are desired, an occupational therapy student should schedule a formal appointment at a clinic of their choice.

Financial support committee

The College of Allied Health Professions Financial Support Committee selects tuition remission recipients. The Occupational Therapy Program may also recommend tuition remission or scholarships outside of those selected through the College. The philosophy of the Occupational Therapy Program is to help as many students as possible. Factors that are considered during selection of tuition remission may include academic achievement, financial need, leadership, extra-curricular activities, and outside funding. The selection process typically occurs in mid-June, after the spring semester grades have been recorded. See communications from Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA) for information about how to apply.

Fund-raising and apparel
Fund-raising activities and apparel designs must be pre-approved by the Program Director or Associate Director. Information about space scheduling and fundraising is available on the UNMC wiki page, including a fundraising form on the website you can use to submit. Any fund-raising activity must be consistent with professional standards, and in the best interest of the image of the profession and the Program. Student names and addresses may not be sold for fund-raising purposes.

Mobile telephones
Use of mobile phones during class is discouraged unless otherwise directed by the instructor. When the Occupational Therapy Program office receives a student-directed message in an emergency, faculty or staff will try to contact the student.

Netiquette
Please follow rules of basic netiquette throughout course interactions.
- Be courteous to others.
- Read what others have posted to avoid repeating comments.
- Be concise and explicit when posting.
- Participate actively in discussions. Complete prework, considering the topics.
- Use civil language. Disagree with ideas, not people. Provide respectful feedback.
- Abide by HIPAA and FERPA, posting only information about yourself that you are comfortable sharing.
- If your posting is for a specific person or group, make sure you address it to them. Realize, however, that others will probably read it.
- Recognize and value the diverse experiences, abilities, and knowledge each person brings.
- Provide a descriptive subject line to identify the topic.
- Use the spell check! Misteaks in speling and grammer reflect poorly on your persunal and porfesional development.
- NO POSTING WITH YOUR CAPS LOCK ON. NO SHOUTING.
- Let your colleagues know when you will be away, or if you are having connectivity issues.
- Cite your references.

Pregnancy
Students who are pregnant and/or parenting are protected by Title IX, support and accommodate are available through the Division of Student Success.

Recording lectures
Lectures may be recorded and posted on the Learning Management System (Canvas) for courses in the Occupational Therapy Program. Lecture recordings provide an added method to learn and a backup in case of a video conferencing system interruption.

Travel
Students are required to travel 1-3x per semester for class activities as well as for fieldwork and capstone. Travel to professional conferences is encouraged but not required. Travel is a student expense. Student travel for required or optional school-related events during their matriculation are covered by a UNMC Travel Authorization (TA). For further information on travel policies, please see the CAHP Handbook. Travel for Level I Fieldwork, Level II Fieldwork, and Doctoral Capstone are covered under a separate travel policy, addressed in the Fieldwork and Capstone manual.

University computers and information systems
Computer clusters are available for student use at many locations around campus, including the Leon S. McGoogan Health Science Library on the Omaha campus and Calvin T. Ryan Library on Kearney campus.

SECTION 5. SAFETY STANDARDS

Students are expected to abide by UNMC Safety, Security, and Compliance Policies, and by Program policies related to equipment use, and policies specific to fieldwork and capstone placement. The safe practice of Occupational therapy is required in all educational and professional settings. Safe practice entails minimizing risk to patients, self, and others.

Protection student laboratory consent

The Program provides details related to responsibilities, potential risks, and discomfort associated with participation in the laboratory. Students must have a signed informed consent form on file with the Occupational Program before taking part in curricular laboratory activities.

Protection from infectious diseases

Students enrolled in the program must meet the requirements as listed in the CAHP Student Handbook and the UNMC Student Handbook related to protection from bloodborne pathogens and infectious diseases. The UNMC Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Plan includes annual testing for tuberculosis.

Online training and certification requirements

Students enrolled in the program are responsible for meeting all current online training and certification requirements. Students can access their training and certification records and complete the required online training by following these steps:

- Go to the "Care" site
- Under "Training and Certification," click on "my requirements"
- The next screen shows the status of your online training and certification requirements and provides links to the online training.
- You may print a certificate of completion any time you need to provide written documentation of your training and certification status.

Requirements include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Blood borne pathogen and tuberculosis training
- HIPPA training
- Privacy, confidentiality, and information security - UNMC Policy 6045
- Safety competency assessment
- Respiratory fit testing

BLS (Basic Life Support) certification

All students must show proof of BLS certification yearly Classes are offered through a variety of institutions, including the American Heart Association and the American Red Cross. Certification is required for participation in all Fieldwork experiences.

Cleaning toys and equipment

All toys, equipment, mats, that have been used during lab classes are placed in a container labeled "dirty" and cleaned according to current university policy. To wash and disinfect hard plastic toys and equipment:

- Scrub toys or equipment in warm, soapy water. Use a brush to reach into crevices.
- Rinse toys or equipment with clean water.
- If submersible, wash in the dishwasher or immerse toy or equipment
- Air dry in dishwasher with no heat or remove from bleach solution and allow to air dry.

Clean toys and equipment that cannot be immersed with soap and water, are sprayed with bleach or other cleaning solution and wiped dry. Cloth toys are not used unless they can be placed in the hot water cycle of a washing machine. Once cleaned, toys and equipment are returned to the routine storage cabinets. Bleach solution is remade when needed.

Maintenance of physical space

Many areas within the University are learning labs, extensively used for instructional purposes across students from many Colleges. Please be aware that space is limited, and students are encouraged to also use available areas across campus. Students should always be aware when classes are in session and act respectfully (e.g., lowering voice volume when talking in the hallway, checking the room occupancy before opening the door).

All areas are to be kept neat and orderly, particularly when leaving at the end of a class. Each person (student, staff, and faculty) is responsible for maintaining the environment whenever they are at the University. If any liquid, food, art materials, or other such substances are spilled within any of the buildings, the person responsible for the spill must clean it up at once. This is not the responsibility of the custodial staff. Each lab has cleaning supplies.

Hazardous materials

There are a few hazardous materials used in the Program. All hazardous materials should be listed with the facilities department. Safe handling instructions and the Safety Data Sheet Manual are in the administrative office.

SECTION 6. ORGANIZATIONS

American Occupational Therapy Association membership

Each student in the Occupational Therapy Program must be a member of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). Students upload annual membership documentation to their Exxat profile. AOTA Membership benefits include subscriptions to *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, *OT Practice* magazine, Special Interest Section *Quarterly Practice Connections*, *OT Practice Pulse*, and AOTA *Alerts*. Benefits also include access to CommunOT, online courses, professional documents and resources, and discounted conference registration. Many resources are required for multiple courses within the curriculum.

Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA)

The Student Occupational Therapy Association is endorsed by the University of Nebraska. The AOTA Assembly of Student Delegates Steering Committee (ASDSC) has created a handbook to support development of a student occupational therapy association (SOTA).

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education

The entry-level occupational therapy doctoral degree program has been granted Preaccreditation status by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE ®) of the American Occupational Therapy Association, located at 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200, North Bethesda, MD, 20852-4929. ACOTE's telephone number is 301-652-AOTA. ACOTE's web address is www.acoteonline.org.

SECTION 7. TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Receiving an entry-level doctoral degree in occupational therapy from the Occupational Therapy Program indicates the graduate is eligible to take the national certification examination and is prepared to enter the profession. This document outlines technical standards and essential functions required for UNMC occupational therapy students to complete their education and training in the Occupational Therapy (OT) Program. Technical standards and essential functions apply to academic and clinical settings, as well as civil public behavior.

Technical standards and essential functions are stated to ensure that all students are aware of the expectations of the program. Students affirm their compliance, with or without reasonable accommodation, as a condition of admission and on an annual basis thereafter.

Definitions

- *Technical standards* are the knowledge, skills, and attitudes a student applicant must possess at admission, indicating their preparation for entry into the program. Technical standards are crucial for continued participation in the program.
- *Essential functions* are the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that all students must be able to execute, with or without a reasonable accommodation, in order to graduate from the program. Essential functions are crucial for occupational therapists in practice.
- *Reasonable accommodation* will be provided for qualified students with disabilities so they can meet essential functions. Reasonable accommodations will be established on an individual basis in consultation with the UNMC Accessibility Services Center.

Students must meet essential functions in four categories across academic and practice settings in order to progress in and complete the Occupational Therapy Program. The categories include:

1. Professional standards and ethics;
2. Mental functions;
3. Sensory- and movement-related functions; and
4. Communication and social interaction.

1. Professional standards and ethics

Technical standards *The entering student is expected to:*	*Essential functions* *The enrolled student will:*
• Read, write, and understand oral and written English • Demonstrate honesty, integrity, responsibility, compassion, ethics, and respect for others' rights and property • Demonstrate cultural humility • Maintain privacy and confidentiality of peers, faculty, staff, and clients • Adhere to safety precautions • Recognize potentially dangerous situations and proceed safely to minimize risk of injury to self or others • Accept and give constructive feedback • Maintain work areas, equipment, and supplies	• Adhere to the AOTA Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics (2020) • Demonstrate honesty and integrity internal and external to didactic and clinical environments • Recognize and promote occupational justice for all persons • Create a context in which clients are seen, valued, and heard • Consistently apply universal precautions and infection control measures • Collaborate with peers, faculty, FW educators, mentors, supervisors, clients, care partners, and team members

• Maintain personal appearance and hygiene • Complete required assignments and tests within established timelines • Attend class approximately 35+ hours per week including large groups, small groups, and integrated clinical experiences • Participate in learning activities outside of class • Effectively manage multiple demands and competing priorities • Maintain professional boundaries with peers, faculty, and supervisors	• Demonstrate professional competence, conduct, and growth through reflective self-assessment • Demonstrate consistent professionalism in classroom and practice settings • Actively engage in the supervisory process • Complete health tests and immunizations required by the program or practice settings, or provide documentation of exempt status (immunization status may delay graduation) • Complete and pass state and federal criminal background checks • Maintain current CPR certification • Adhere to privacy regulations (HIPAA and FERPA) • Anticipate, recognize, and intervene during potentially dangerous situations, proceeding safely to minimize risk of injury to self, clients, or others • Complete client evaluations, interventions, and documentation within established timelines

2. Mental functions

Technical standards *The entering student is expected to:*	*Essential functions* *The enrolled student will:*
• Receive, process, and comprehend text, oral presentation, numbers, and graphs displayed in print, lecture, and audio-visual formats. Store information for reference. • Use intellectual skills including attention, comprehension, measurement, mathematical calculation, reasoning, integration, analysis, critical thinking, comparison, problem-solving, self-directed learning, and planning • Critically evaluate their own performance and the performance of others • Articulate rationale for decision making • Effectively use electronic technologies such as computers, tablets, and mobile phones and supporting software programs (e.g., learning management system, electronic health records, Microsoft Office Suite, Zoom) • Produce concise and grammatically correct written communication • Manage time and calendar effectively • Identify and interpret affect and nonverbal cues among peers and instructors • Follow instructions and processes	• Observe, evaluate, and analyze clients, contexts, and occupations which influence occupational performance • Analyze and synthesize abundant information in a short period of time from a variety of sources • Critically think and reason in didactic and practice settings • Integrate occupation-based theories and models with other information during the OT process • Identify and interpret affect, nonverbal cues, and response to intervention for people, groups, and populations • Select relevant screening, assessment, and evaluation methods for people, groups, and populations • Accurately interpret and synthesize evaluation results • Make informed practice decisions using statistics, tests, measurements, and research • Develop and implement intervention plans for people, groups, and populations

	• Plan scope, frequency, and duration of service delivery • Update, modify, and terminate plans of care • Refer clients to services within or outside the profession as needed • Collaborate with peers, faculty, supervisors, clients, care partners, and team members • Supervise, select, and delegate tasks • Follow all policies, procedures, and safety standards of program and practice settings • Monitor health and safety of self and others and the environment and identify when intervention is needed

3. Sensory and movement-related functions

Technical standards *The entering student is expected to:*	*Essential functions* *The enrolled student will:*
• Participate in fine and gross motor tasks • Use senses for observation and process sensory information from people and the environment • Participate in exploratory learning involving handling objects of various size and weight • Travel in a timely fashion to class, labs, and practice settings • Self-monitor and manage self in class, labs, and practice settings, for extended periods of time • Produce legible written communication (handwritten and electronic)	• Observe and participate in active experiential learning; perform and/or demonstrate ability to instruct others in manual and skilled tasks in class, lab, and practice settings (e.g., orthotic fabrication, daily activities, safe patient handling, equipment management, use of physical agent modalities) • Perform evaluations and interventions that require palpation, manipulation of clinical tools, safe positioning of client and self, and demonstration of assistive devices and therapeutic techniques • Interpret and use sensory information from people and the environment for observation, evaluation, and intervention • Initiate safety and emergency responses and/or assist others to provide prompt care • Tolerate and safely handle body fluids and human specimens

4. Communication and social interaction

Technical standards *The entering student is expected to:*	*Essential functions* *The enrolled student will:*
• Communicate meaning to others • Demonstrate awareness of own non-verbal communication and interpretation by others • Interpret verbal and nonverbal communication • Produce concise, explicit, understandable, and legible written communication • Communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written formats	• Communicate respectfully with peers, faculty, supervisors, clients, care partners, and team members including people from diverse backgrounds and varied abilities in educational activities and professional practice • Build rapport and gather information with clients and care partners • Read and record efficiently, accurately, and legibly in client record (charts, tests)

• Actively engage in small groups, class discussions, and presentations • Report concerns to relevant personnel specific to situation • Address problems or questions in a timely fashion	• Communicate any aspect of the OT process concisely in written and verbal formats • Produce professional quality educational materials, adjusting for intended audience • Manage conflict constructively • Balance transparency, confidentiality, and privacy

SECTION 8. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
UNMC Occupational Therapy Program

A graduate from the UNMC OTD Program will:

1. *Occupational therapy practice.* Create and implement evidence-informed, theory-driven, and occupation-based assessment and intervention plans for individuals, groups, and populations across the continuum of care with clients of all ages.
2. *Occupation for health.* Use occupation as the basis of the occupational therapy process to promote health and well-being for clients experiencing occupational deprivation, alienation, or marginalization.
3. *Client-centeredness.* Value the client's role as a member of the therapeutic collaboration and view the client in a holistic manner, considering all factors that contribute to occupational performance in context.
4. *Advocacy.* Advocate for the distinct value of occupation, occupational therapy, and occupational justice by supporting policies and actions that allow individuals, groups, and populations to engage in occupations and access occupational therapy services.
5. *Occupational therapist as educator. C*reate and deliver educational materials relevant to the setting and client.
6. *Knowledge translation.* Translate and implement evolving, relevant scholarship across practice, research, education, and policy. Design for dissemination, sustainability, and contribution to a body of knowledge.
7. *Professional decision-making*. Apply sound clinical reasoning and judgment, referencing tools such as the code of ethics, professional standards, institutional policy, and government requirements for guidance.
8. *Collaboration*. Communicate clearly and effectively in a variety of formats with clients, care providers, communities, team members, and other knowledge users. Contribute and articulate occupational therapy's distinct perspective to interprofessional teams for the benefit of the client.
9. *Cultural humility.* Provide culturally humble and equitable care to all clients; consider diverse perspectives and promote inclusion in all areas of practice.
10. *Lifelong learning.* Create an ongoing professional development plan that reflects goals for the benefit of self and others.
11. *Contemporary technology.* Integrate contemporary technology into service delivery (including but not limited to electronic health information systems, rehabilitative technologies, assistive devices, mainstream technology, and service delivery models).
12. *Leadership and management.* Engage in leadership experiences and apply knowledge gained from an in-depth study in an area of focus to advance practice, scholarship, education, or policy; be prepared to oversee occupational therapy operations.