



**University of Nebraska
Medical CenterSM**

COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Occupational Therapy Program

Student Handbook

Entering 2026, Graduating Class of 2029

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, University [Catalog](#), [UNMC website](#), and Program course syllabi. All UNMC students are expected to follow the policies and procedures of the University, College, and Program. Be familiar with the contents of each resource. Keep the websites and handbooks bookmarked on your computer as useful resources. All students, regardless of their year of enrollment, are responsible for upholding current and revised policies.

You will receive more information about professional development, Level I Fieldwork, Level II Fieldwork, and the 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 the University, College, or Program deem necessary. Changes may be made without advanced 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) reflects the mission of the University, the philosophy of the profession, the beliefs and values of the faculty, and the needs of the students.

Program history

The Occupational Therapy Program is housed within the Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, College of Allied Health Professions, University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). The University of Nebraska Board of Regents approved an OTD Program in October 2017. The first class of students matriculated in 2021 and graduated in 2024. The program is offered, and OT faculty actively engage on Omaha and Kearney campuses. Graduates receive a Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree.

In 2016, UNMC opened the Rural Health Science Education Complex in Kearney, located 185 miles west of Omaha. The Kearney campus originally included programs from the Colleges of Nursing and Allied Health Professions. In 2025, the Kearney campus added programs from the College of Pharmacy and in 2026, programs from the Colleges of Medicine, and Public Health.

Occupational Therapy Program Mission

The mission of the Occupational Therapy Program 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.

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.

Accreditation

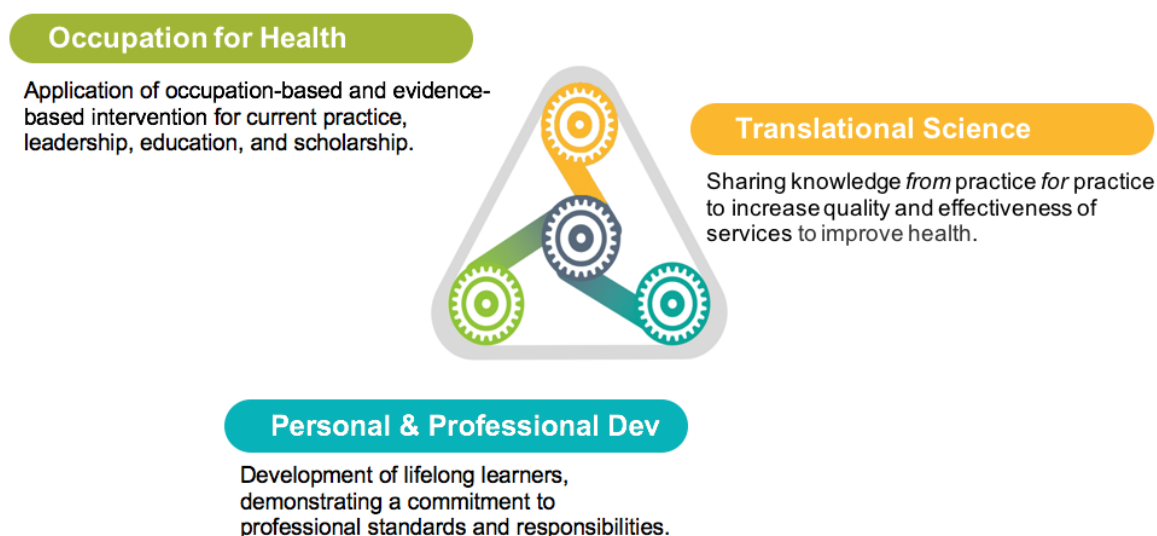
- The entry-level OTD Program (Program) is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®), part of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA): 301-652-6611, www.acoteonline.org or ACOTE c/o Accreditation Department, American Occupational Therapy Association, 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E Bethesda, MD 20814, accred@aota.org.

- The Higher Learning Commission and the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools also accredit UNMC programs.

Fundamental beliefs about humans and how they learn

The UNMC OT Program is consistent with the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Philosophic Base of Occupational Therapy (AOTA, 2025) and Philosophy of Occupational Therapy Education (AOTA, 2018). The 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.

Curricular themes & threads



Instructional design

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*.

Curricular themes

Curricular themes are mapped to the College of Health Professions (CAHP) Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), applied as OTD curricular threads. (CAHP SLOs adopted 2019.)

OTD Theme - Occupation for Health

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

CAHP Student Learning Outcomes/ OTD Threads:

- Foundational Knowledge. Generalize foundational theories, principles, and methodologies to 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.

CAHP Student Learning Objectives/ OTD Threads

- 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.

CAHP Student Learning Objectives/ OTD Threads

- 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.
- Inclusion & Equity. Exhibit culturally sensitive behaviors that promote an inclusive, equitable, and 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.

Program philosophy

We believe in the pursuit of meaningful activity, life occupation, as a fundamental human right. We view learning as occupation for students, necessary for doing, being, and becoming. "Doing + being, becoming and belonging = survival and health" (Wilcock

& Hocking, 2015). 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 ends 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 model the process of growth.

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, and to contribute. We believe the profession has an obligation to involve the community in action and to return knowledge to those who benefit.

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 between 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, 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

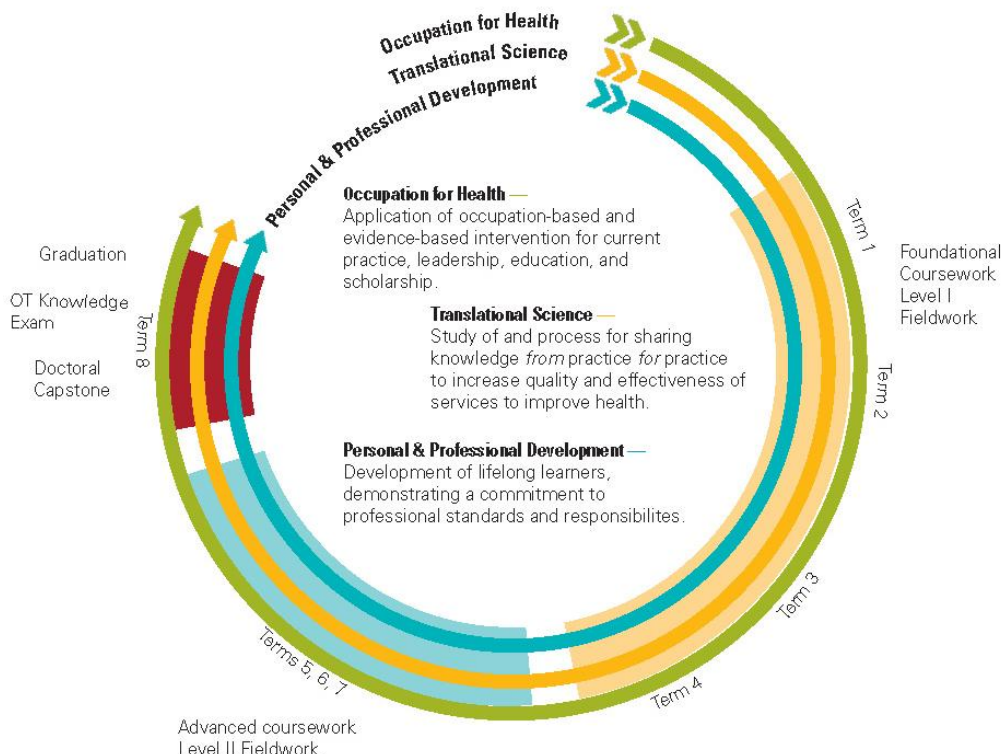
Learning and adaptation are intertwined. Schkade and Schultz (1992) described Occupational Adaptation (OA) as a theoretical frame of reference merging occupation

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.

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Curriculum model



Course sequencing

The OTD degree requires completion of 113 semester credit hours across eight semesters. Course content is delivered via a learning management system, video, and in-person.

Semester 1 (Year 1 – Fall)

OCCT500 Occupational Foundations (3cr)
OCCT501 Structure & Function for Occupation (4cr)
OCCT520 Integrative Practice 1 (3cr)
PHYT502 Human Movement (4cr)

Semester 1 courses address foundational content, interprofessional collaboration, and an introduction to OTD curricular design. All health professions students complete an interprofessional seminar during orientation.

Occupational Foundations provides information related to occupation, occupational science, history of the profession, ethics, and application of *occupation for health*. Structure and Function for Occupation relates anatomy to daily occupations. The course is co-instructed by an occupational therapist and an anatomist.

Human Movement provides information and skills related to client factors, performance skills, and environment in an interprofessional course with physical therapy students. Integrative Practice 1 provides an overview of the curricular design (didactic and clinical). It is the first in a series of courses in which students learn to apply multiple

skills. Students complete self-assessment for *personal and professional development*, examining their own roles and patterns of *occupation for health*. Integrative Practice introduces *translational science* as a professional responsibility.

Semesters 2, 3, and 4 courses have similar structures; each semester builds skills from the prior semester. Courses address occupation-based intervention, the application of evidence for practice, the continued integration of multiple professional skills, and Level I fieldwork experiences.

Semester 2 (Year 1 – Spring)

OCCT521 Integrative Practice 2 (3cr)
 OCCT532 Occupation-based Practice 3 (7cr)
 OCCT540 Evidence-based Practice 1 (3cr)
 OCCT550 Fieldwork 1A (1cr)

Semester 3 (Year 1 – Summer)

OCCT510 Physical Agent Modalities (3cr)
 OCCT522 Integrative Practice 3 (3cr)
 OCCT531 Occupation-based Practice 2 (7cr)
 OCCT541 Evidence-based Practice 2 (3cr)
 OCCT551 Fieldwork 1B (1cr)

Semester 4 (Year 2 – Fall)

OCCT623 Integrative Practice 4 (3cr)
 OCCT530 Occupation-based Practice 1 (7cr)
 OCCT642 Evidence-based Practice 3 (3cr)
 OCCT552 Fieldwork 1C (1cr)

Integrative Practice courses 2, 3, and 4 support expansion of skills used across all areas of practice: teamwork, communication, ethics, culture, health literacy, etc. Much work is case based with increasing complexity both within a single semester and from one semester to the next. Cases add complexity with confounding factors (diagnostic, polypharmacy, contextual, ethical issues, 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. Integrative Practice 4 prepares students for Level II Fieldwork.

Occupational-based Practice (OBP) courses 1, 2, and 3 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, demanding adaptation and relative mastery.

Evidence-based Practice (EBP) courses 1, 2, and 3 provide skills for scholarship with connection to *knowledge translation* and application of *occupation for health*. EBP1 addresses skills for clear design and knowledge translation. EBP2 and EBP3 address continued development of research methods and methodology, knowledge, and application and effective intervention. Students learn the occupations of a researcher in faculty-led scholarly lab experiences.

Level I Fieldwork courses (A, B, and C) are a three-course sequence providing directed observation and participation in selected aspects of the occupational therapy process. Level I Fieldwork corresponds to concurrent enrollment in Occupation-based Practice, emphasizing application of *occupation for health* and *personal and professional development*. Level IA has a primary focus on the role of occupational therapy practitioners addressing mental health, behavioral health, or psychosocial aspects of client performance to support their engagement in occupations.

Physical Agent Modalities (PAMs) in Semester 3 presents theory and application of physical agents, a requirement by the state of Nebraska for separate PAMs licensure.

Semesters 5, 6, and 7. During two semesters, students will complete full-time fieldwork; the alternate semester includes advanced coursework. The course sequence will differ slightly for individual students during semesters 5-7. A split cohort supports fieldwork experiences within available sites across a calendar year. Students alternate face-to-face fieldwork with online coursework.

Semester 5 (Year 2 – Spring)

OCCT710 Doctoral Capstone 1 concurrent with Fieldwork or Coursework (1cr)

OCCT650 Fieldwork 2A (12cr)

OR

OCCT700 Management Admin & Policy (4cr)

OCCT701 Practitioner as Educator (4cr)

OCCT702 Emerging Practice & Advocacy (4cr)

Semester 6 (Year 2 – Summer)

OCCT711 Doctoral Capstone 2 concurrent with Fieldwork or Coursework (1cr)

OCCT651 Fieldwork 2A or B (12cr)

OR

OCCT700 Management Admin & Policy (4cr)

OCCT701 Practitioner as Educator (4cr)

OCCT702 Emerging Practice & Advocacy (4cr)

Semester 7 (Year 3 – Fall)

OCCT712 Doctoral Capstone 3 concurrent with Fieldwork or Coursework (1cr)

OCCT651 Fieldwork 2B (12cr)

OR

OCCT700 Management Admin & Policy (4cr)

OCCT701 Practitioner as Educator (4cr)

OCCT702 Emerging Practice & Advocacy (4cr)

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, Administration, & 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 for multiple settings and learners. Each student serves as a teaching assistant for a semester.

The doctoral capstone (DC) series crosses Semesters 5, 6, 7, and 8. DC 1, DC 2, and DC 3 support the development of the doctoral experience and project. The series includes the design and development of individual capstones including a literature review, needs assessment, goals/objectives, a plan to evaluate project outcomes and finalized contracts and professional development plans.

Semester 8. The final doctoral capstone courses take place in semester 8.

Semester 8 (Year 3 – Spring)

OCCT713 Doctoral Capstone 4 (14cr)

OCCT714 Doctoral Capstone 5 (1cr)

DC 4 is the doctoral experience and preparation of doctoral projects in the community, in one or more areas of expertise. DC 5 supports translation of the knowledge gained in the doctoral experience and capstone project, to practice. Doctoral capstone supports community needs, faculty scholarly agendas, and collaboration with knowledge users. Students demonstrate scholarship, knowledge synthesis, and translation.

Evaluation philosophy

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 and within individual courses.

Evaluation strategies are primarily mid and higher taxonomic level skills typically used in practice. For example, evaluations focused on *occupation for health* may include case studies, teaching plans, patient education materials, equipment ordering, completion of ergonomic 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* may include knowledge translation plans, grants, and advocacy plans. Evaluation focused on *personal and professional development* includes student reflection with advisor guidance for professional development plan goal setting and identification of 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. Examples of formative assessment include the skills checks in OBP coursework and the tickets to class in the EBP courses series. Summative evaluation takes place when tasks or courses are complete. Summative evaluation is a summary to showcase what has been learned. Examples include the Standardized Patient Competence Exams (SPACE) in semesters 2-4, the Objective Structured Competence Exam (OSCE), or the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation (FWPE). Confirmative evaluation comes in the form of the OT Knowledge Exam, National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (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.

Integrated experiences are one other type of student evaluation used in the curriculum. They often involve case application to facilitate enduring learning by integrating key concepts from courses across the semester and reflect the process of professional growth, which is a central theme of the UNMC curriculum. Each case requires synthesis of learning and provides a springboard to the concepts presented in subsequent semesters. The integrated experience is an opportunity for each student to demonstrate emerging competency in specific attitudes, behavior, and skills outlined in the assignment.

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, SPACEs, 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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Types of Evaluation

The program uses a variety of methods to assess knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Timing and content of assessments is at the discretion of the course instructor to meet course objectives and accreditation Standards.

Learning activities

Learning activities support knowledge, skills, and attitudes focusing on key concepts in preparation for active learning and professional practice. They may include formative worksheets, reflections, discussion board posts, tickets to class, case studies, etc.

Assignments

Assignments are summative demonstrations of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required of an occupational therapy practitioner. They may include reflections, written papers, projects, case studies, instruction plans, business plans, etc.

Exams and quizzes

Examinations and quizzes assess knowledge. Some exams and quizzes occur via an online secure system; others may be proctored in person. Students are responsible for keeping their device(s) exam ready. Course instructors establish exam procedures, clarifying expectations prior to the start. Students are responsible for completing exams according to course requirements.

Skill competency assessments

Skill competency assessments (SCAs) support demonstration of practice skills.

Integrated examinations

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

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. Grades are based on information provided by the fieldwork educator, content expert, faculty mentor, the student, and the information contained in the evaluation.

Student Learning Outcomes

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*. Create 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 stakeholders. 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.

SECTION 2. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Credit for previous courses, work experience, and transfer

No credit is offered for work experience or previous occupational therapy coursework. Students interested in transferring into the UNMC Occupational Therapy Program from another 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 complete 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 reasons for transfer. The admissions committee compares course syllabi standards and content with accreditation content standards and current curriculum design to be considered for transfer. Acceptance is not guaranteed.

Program Support and Resource Committee

The Program Support and Resource Committee (PSRC) supports student success in adhering to academic and professional standards and the needs of diverse students to complete the program. Students may be referred to the PSRC for concerns outside the scope of an individual course. The Committee works with students to develop adaptive strategies and make use of available resources. PSRC communicates with instructors, advisors, students, and administrators to address progression and retention or interruptions in progression such as leaves of absence, incomplete coursework, course failure, decelerated programs of study, or nonadherence to the technical standards and essential functions.

Grading scale

Letter grades are assigned based on the student's 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 listed below; however, course coordinators/instructors have autonomy to publish their own scales in the syllabus for their class.

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 averages are calculated using the following numeric values.

A+ 4.0 (optional)	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

Semester and cumulative GPAs are auto-calculated in MyRecords, the University's student information system. Semester progress is available within each course's learning management system (Canvas). 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.

Academic progression

Students are expected to meet academic and professional standards for retention, progression, and eligibility to graduate. Academic and professional standards include minimum grade requirements, academic integrity, professional behavior, technical standards and essential functions, and safety standards.

Academic standing

Successful completion of each course is a prerequisite for completion of the Program. Academic good standing requirements include:

- A minimum final grade of C (73%) or a grade of "pass" at a minimum of 73% for each course, regardless of the Program, School, or College offering the course.
- An overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or better in each semester.
- An overall cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better throughout the curriculum.
- The program follows College policies of progression and retention. Students may retake no more than 2 courses in semesters 1-4 to progress in the program of study.

A student who does not meet course requirements may be placed on academic probation; graduation from the Program may be delayed or denied. A student may be placed on academic probation for:

- incomplete course,
- failure of a course,
- failure of a Level II Fieldwork experience,
- failure of the doctoral capstone 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 technical standards and essential functions.

A student on academic probation must complete an action plan agreed on and signed by the student, advisor, chairperson of the OT PSRC, and the program director 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 action as recommended by the OT PSRC. 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.

Incomplete grades

Without instructor approval, all missing course work will receive a score of zero. A grade of Incomplete cannot be used to remediate failing performance. Students cannot progress to new coursework while holding an Incomplete in a prerequisite course.

Students may receive a grade of incomplete (I) for a didactic course in which they have made satisfactory progress, but extenuating circumstances prevent completion by the end of the semester. Instructors report incomplete grades with a learning contract to the PSRC. The student and course instructor create a learning contract by the end of the semester. A student must resolve the learning contract by the deadline specified in the plan but no later than 12 months. If the student does not satisfactorily complete the learning contract, the grade is automatically converted to an F. The PSRC may grant individual exceptions.

Failing grades

Any grade of less than a C (73%) 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 OT PSRC to develop an action plan. The OT PSRC 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. Students failing a Level II Fieldwork experience are required to repeat it and may repeat no more than one Level II Fieldwork experience.

Professional conduct and academic integrity

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the UNMC Student Policies and Procedures Code of and the American Occupational Therapy Association Code of Ethics. Students represent UNMC, the Program, and the profession throughout their education and 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, social media violation, and plagiarism. Any violation of standards, ethics, academic integrity, or professional conduct may be subject to disciplinary review.

Artificial intelligence

Students are directed to follow [UNMC AI Use Guidelines - University of Nebraska Medical Center](#). 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.

Rights of appeal

Any student wishing to appeal a grade or the decision of faculty regarding his or her performance or right to continue in the program, may do so by following the [UNMC Procedure for Appeals](#). Steps to resolve disagreements prior escalation to the CAHP

include: 1) the instructor; 2) PSRC; and 3) Program Director in collaboration with the academic advisor.

Separation from the Program

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 OT PSRC. 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 Enrollment Management and Student Affairs 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 during the following academic year at the start of the semester following the last semester successfully completed or may resume under the recommendation of the OT PSRC.

Returning from a leave of absence. At the time a required leave of absence is imposed, the OT PSRC 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 Policies

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.

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 Policies and Procedures for information regarding [tuition obligations](#). In addition, the student should visit the CAHP [Office of Enrollment Management and 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, non-adherence to safety standards, or non-adherence to the technical standards and essential functions. If dismissed, the student should refer to the CAHP Student Policies for a discussion of the appeals process and the UNMC Policies and Procedures for information regarding [tuition obligations](#). In addition, the student should visit the [Financial Aid Office](#) to discuss the effects of dismissal on tuition, loans, and scholarships.

Distance education delivery

The OT Program offers one program to one cohort across two campuses via distance technology. Students choose a campus (Kearney or Omaha) for the duration of their education for their on-campus lab. A typical week in the program includes active learning anywhere, on-campus lab experiences, community-based fieldwork and capstone experiences, and self-directed learning.

Student privacy

The program ensures protection of student privacy in the distance learning environment in several ways. Students are encouraged to use virtual background and mute their microphones for visual and spatial privacy. Students are required to create robust passwords with regular updates in accordance with UNMC requirements and use two-factor authentication to ensure privacy and identity. [Federal regulations](#) (FERPA) address privacy of educational records for all students, including distance students. Canvas, the course learning management system, provides a secure and private method of tracking student engagement, assignments, and feedback on course progress.

UNMC email and other software systems (e.g., MyRecords, Canvas, Microsoft Office Suite, Exxat) require [two-factor authentication](#) establishing that a student enrolled in the program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives academic credit.

Technology and resources

UNMC has [online student support](#) services available, including accommodations, bookstore, information technology, health insurance, library, and an ombuds program. Additional [academic IT support](#) is also available for students. The OT Program uses the Canvas course learning management system and the Microsoft Office 365 software suite or all course materials and schedules. Students access Canvas and Office 365 with their UNMC username and password and two-factor authentication. The Program uses the Exxat online database for fieldwork and capstone site and student compliance information. Zoom audio-video technology is used for online synchronous class sessions. UNMC uses Zoom and Echo360 technology for recording and viewing class sessions. All UNMC students have access to library resources through the [McGoogan Library](#). The [Office of Interactive E-Learning](#) has many resources available for distance learners including an e-gallery of interactive e-learning modules on a variety of health care topics.

Distance student charges

The program does not charge students additional fees to verify student identity at the time of registration or enrollment.

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 leave of absence and/or remediation. See also: University of Nebraska Medical Center [Catalog](#)

Graduation requirements

To graduate from the Occupational Therapy Program, students must meet the following requirements as outlined in the University of Nebraska Medical Center [Catalog](#):

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

Students must also discharge all indebtedness to the University of Nebraska Medical Center as outlined in the [Catalog](#).

CAHP convocation and hooding 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.

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.

SECTION 3. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The Program facilitates student access to a variety of health and well-being resources to support success inside and outside the classroom. The following policies, procedures, and links to CAHP and UNMC resources inform students of equitable access to services available to students through the didactic, fieldwork, and capstone portions of the program. The services and supports listed in this section are in alphabetical order.

See also:

- UNMC [Division of Student Success](#)
- [New Student Onboarding](#)
- CAHP [Enrollment Management and Student Affairs](#) (EMSA)

Academic calendar

The Program provides course schedules via Canvas, class schedules via Outlook, and 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.

Access to learning environments

Occupational therapy students on the Omaha campus (42nd and Emile, Omaha, NE 68198) have access to Wittson Hall 4004 and Bennett Hall 4016 with their student badge. Students on the Kearney campus (2402 University Dr. Kearney, NE 68849) have access to the Health Science Education Complex (HSEC1) rooms 204 and 206 with their student identification badge. These physical classrooms are accessible via elevator. All main entrances to campus buildings are accessible with automated doors. All exterior building entrances require badge access.

Students may study in OT designated classrooms when they are not otherwise in use. Activity of Daily Living (ADL) spaces are accessed with faculty in attendance. Many areas within the University are learning spaces, extensively used for instructional purposes across students from many Colleges. Students are encouraged to use available areas across campuses for independent study or small group collaboration, noting room reservation and occupancy. Students wishing to use rooms beyond designated OT spaces on either campus may contact the UNMC Central Room Scheduling Office at 402-559-7254. HSEC rooms can be scheduled through the CAHP Administrative Assistant, 308-865-8324. UNK campus spaces can be reserved via University Facilities, 308-865-8692.

All online course content in Canvas, the course learning management system, is continuously monitored for accessibility through the built-in accessibility tool and modified as needed to ensure compliance. The program also monitors electronic document accessibility using the accessibility tools in the Microsoft Office 365 suite.

Accommodations

Students with a temporary or permanent disability communicate directly with the [Accessibility Services Center](#) (ASC) for reasonable accommodations under the

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students discuss concerns with ASC staff to establish the need and process for accommodation. The UNMC ASC office can be reached by phone at 402-559-7276 or by [email address](#).

Students are encouraged to request accommodations as soon as possible for the Program to meet needs promptly (e.g., within the first two weeks of the semester if possible). Accommodations support future coursework; they are not retroactive. If a student develops a health condition or a disability requiring accommodation during the academic program, they should contact the ASC as soon as possible. Preliminary conversation is helpful if a student anticipates a change in health status in the future. All accommodation requests to the ASC are confidential.

The student is responsible for disclosing accommodations **each semester** to each relevant instructor(s) of record. ASC coordination with faculty on the provision of accommodations is made only on a need-to-know basis. Didactic and experiential learning (fieldwork, capstone) may require separate plans for accommodation.

Admission deferral

The Occupational Therapy Program considers requests for deferral of admission for students with unforeseen or 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 students who have been accepted to the program. 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

Students and faculty engage in advising related to conduct and responsibilities to enter the profession, student progress and academic standing, fieldwork education, and the doctoral capstone. Each student is assigned to a faculty member who is an occupational therapy practitioner who serves as advisor during their academic career at UNMC. In alignment with the curriculum design, faculty and students routinely assess and collaborate on professional development plans (PDPs).

During program orientation, students complete an analysis of their personal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) for success in the program. Students may 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.

Students meet with their advisors at least once per semester to review their professional conduct and responsibilities, progress and academic standing, including grade point average, fieldwork, and doctoral capstone. Students initiate advising appointments. All students meet regularly with the academic fieldwork coordinator in semesters 1-7 to plan fieldwork placements and monitor performance. Students are assigned a faculty capstone mentor in semester 5. Students meet regularly with their faculty capstone mentor during semesters 6-8, according to capstone course requirements.

Students and advisors use the PDP template to document advising sessions. Students submit their PDP revisions as an assignment within each Integrative Practice course.

All-class and all-program meetings

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

Attendance

Regular attendance is required for all classes, laboratory sessions, Level I Fieldwork, Level II Fieldwork, and Doctoral Capstone. When a student is absent or tardy, they communicate via email to each instructor and their advisor prior to class. Excessive absences require a meeting with their advisor and may require a learning contract. All course times are listed in Central Standard Time (CST).

Career fair

Career fairs are held annually on each campus for a variety of health professions.

Class cancellation

The Occupational Therapy Program follows the CAHP [Inclement Weather Policy](#). There may be times when course instructors must make a decision about classes or clinical experiences when weather conditions deteriorate, but there is **no official closure announced**. In the event that a course instructor(s) makes the decision to cancel class or clinical, they are responsible for notifying their students, the clinical area involved (as needed), the Program Director, and administrative personnel at the site of closing (e.g., CAHP Assistant Dean at Health Science Education Complex).

Instructors will inform students via email or course learning management system (Canvas) posting. The course instructor(s) are responsible for arranging rescheduled completion of class or clinical experience. In the event of a campus closure at one site only, the following modifications may include:

- 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.
- In-person exams or skill competence assessments (SCA): Exams or SCAs 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.

Community resources

- Maverick [food pantry](#), Omaha
- Loper [food pantry](#), Kearney
- Pet [food pantry](#), Omaha
- Pet [food pantry](#), Kearney
- [Legal Aid of Nebraska](#)
- Omaha For Us [Community Center](#)
- [Kearney Safe Center](#)

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 calendar year (Jan.1), each student's printing account is loaded with \$50 to be used towards printing and copying for the calendar year. There are no refunds for purchases or unused pages. For more information about printing, refer to the UNMC [information page](#) and [printing platform](#).

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 [reproducing copyrighted materials](#).

Dress code

The UNMC [dress code policy](#) states 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.

When personal grooming interferes with learning, safety, or does not meet policy, the faculty will address concerns directly with the student and develop a plan for improvement as needed. In some cases, unprofessional appearance may negatively affect professional development and evaluations.

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 their University email account while enrolled. Students are responsible for checking their email account regularly.

Students should follow formal business etiquette when writing email, including a relevant topic in the subject line and full name in a signature line.

Instructors check email regularly but there may be times when they are unavailable due to other commitments and job responsibilities. Students can expect responses from instructors within 48 hours on weekdays. Evening and weekend responses are an exception, not the expected standard. Individual instructors may provide an alternative method of communication for time-sensitive issues.

Employment

Enrollment in the Program is a full-time responsibility. For students who are employed while enrolled in the Program, academic activities and requirements take precedence over employment. The Program does require occasional evening and/or Saturday classes and events.

Students who are employed or volunteer 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 use

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

Students receive select lab materials of their own (for example: goniometers, ADL equipment, orthotic material). Students develop their own sensory and cognitive screening toolkit. Students may check out select occupational therapy equipment for class-related activities, including fieldwork and capstone, with permission from the course instructor. The Program Coordinator may facilitate check-out and return of the equipment. All items checked out by a student must be returned before a student is cleared for graduation. Students are responsible for the upkeep of classroom/laboratory areas. No food or drink is to be left in any UNMC classroom/laboratory areas. 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.

Faculty providing services to students

Program faculty are not allowed to provide occupational therapy services to current students during class time or outside of a formal clinical environment. If occupational therapy services are desired, a student may schedule a formal appointment at a clinic of their choice.

Fundraising and apparel

Fundraising activities and apparel designs must be pre-approved by the Program Director or designee. Information about fundraising is available on this UNMC [webpage](#). Student names and addresses may not be sold for fundraising purposes.

Grievance resolution

Grievances related to conditions that adversely impact the student's ability to successfully complete their program of study may be resolved according to the [UNMC CAHP Student Grievance Resolution Policy](#).

Learning Management System (Canvas)

UNMC uses Canvas as the Learning Management System. Courses are available 24 hours a day and offer flexibility for students and instructors. Students are responsible for checking Canvas regularly.

Library resources

A variety of resources are available to students via the [Leon S. McGoogan Health Science Library](#), and Health Science Education Complex and Calvin T. Ryan Library (Kearney). Resources include online library services, print books, anatomical models, research support, and student well-being resources.

Mobile telephones

Mobile phone use during class is discouraged unless directed by the instructor or in the event of an emergency.

Recordings

Instructors may record class sessions using Zoom or Echo360 and post for students in Canvas. Students may not record a class/lab session without instructor permission.

Social media

Professional reasoning is required when using social media. Consistent with HIPAA, students may not discuss patient care events on social media, even if names or other identifiers are eliminated. Students are required to adhere to UNMC [Social Media Guidelines](#), [Policies and Procedures](#) and [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Technology requirements

UNMC Occupational Therapy Program students are responsible for having a desktop, laptop, or tablet that [meets specified requirements](#). A mobile telephone will not suffice. UNMC email and other software systems (e.g., MyRecords, Canvas, Microsoft Office

Suite) require [two-factor authentication](#) establishing that a student enrolled in the program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives academic credit.

Travel

Students are required to travel 1-3x per semester for class-related activities in addition to travel for fieldwork and capstone. Students are responsible for travel expenses. 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. Travel to state and national professional conferences is encouraged but not required.

SECTION 4. SAFETY STANDARDS

Safe practice is required in all educational and professional settings to minimize risk to patients, self, and others. Students regularly complete UNMC compliance modules related to safety, privacy, and emergency preparedness and adhere to UNMC [Safety, Security, and Compliance Policies](#).

Online training and certification requirements

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

- Go to the [Care](#) site,
- Signing in with a student username and password
- Under “Training and Certification,” click on “my requirements”.
- The next screen shows the status of online training and certification requirements.
- Students may print or save a PDF certificate of completion any time written documentation of training and certification status is needed.
- Students upload certificates of completion to their Exxat Compliance profile.

Requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Emergency Preparedness
- FERPA
- HIPPA
- Information Security Awareness
- Safety and Hazard Communications
- Statement of Understanding
- One time acknowledgement of student’s promise to pay tuition and fees
- Title IX Student Training

Emergency management

For campus emergencies requiring immediate evacuation, police, fire or medical aid, call 402-559-5555. Download the [UNMC Alert](#) mobile app for direct-dial buttons to public safety, friend walk features, emergency preparedness guides, and campus maps. Emergency management [training](#) includes active shooter, severe weather, chemical spills, fires, bomb threats, and medical emergencies. Students are required to review and acknowledge evacuation procedures during new student orientation. Students are responsible for updating their contact information in the Canvas Student Information Site for the duration of the program for use in case of emergency.

Student laboratory consent

The Program provides details related to responsibilities and potential risks associated with participation in education laboratories. Students sign a consent form before taking part in curricular laboratory activities.

Infectious diseases

Students enrolled in the program must meet the requirements listed in CAHP [Student Policies](#) and UNMC [Student Policies and Procedures](#) related to protection from bloodborne pathogens and infectious diseases. The UNMC [Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Plan](#) includes annual testing for tuberculosis.

Basic Life Support (BLS) Provider certification

All students must show proof of BLS certification for the duration of the program. Classes are offered through a variety of institutions, including the American Heart Association and the American Red Cross.

Maintenance of physical space and cleaning equipment

All areas are to be kept neat and orderly, particularly when leaving at the end of class. Each person (student, staff, and faculty) is responsible for maintaining the environment whenever they are at the University. Environmental services (402-559-6356, unmcehs@unmc.edu) are available for support when needed. Each lab has cleaning supplies. All toys, equipment, mats, that have been used during lab classes are cleaned between uses.

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.

Public safety

[Public safety](#) includes police and security, investigations, criminal and threat assessment, dispatch, emergency management, and a support unit that includes access management, security camera management, and alarms. The Public Safety Dispatch can be reached at 402-559-5111.

SECTION 5. ORGANIZATIONS

American Occupational Therapy Association

The Occupational Therapy Program requires membership in the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) for all students, paid via student fees. 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. AOTA resources are required for multiple courses within the curriculum.

State Occupational Therapy Association

Each state has an occupational therapy association. Students are encouraged to join a state association of their choice. ([Nebraska Occupational Therapy Association](#))

Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA)

The Student Occupational Therapy Association is endorsed by UNMC. It provides many opportunities for leadership, engagement, community service, and mentoring.

Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD)

[COTAD](#) is an international network of OT practitioners and OT/OTA students. The mission of COTAD is to empower occupational therapy leaders to engage in practices that increase JEDI, anti-racism and anti-oppression for a transformative occupational therapy profession. COTAD envisions a future in which occupational therapy is accessible, inclusive, and effective for all.

SECTION 6: TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF A UNMC OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENT

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 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.

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 reasonable accommodations, 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 to progress in and complete the Occupational Therapy Program. The categories include professional standards and ethics; mental functions; sensory- and movement-related functions; and communication and social interaction.

Professional standards and ethics

Technical standards.

The entering student is expected to:

- 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
- 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

Essential functions.

The enrolled student will:

- Adhere to the Occupational Therapy [Code of Ethics](#) (2025)
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity within and outside of 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
- 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)
- Recognize and intervene during potentially dangerous situations and proceed safely to minimize risk of injury to self, clients, or others
- Complete client evaluations, interventions, and documentation within established timeline

Mental functions

Technical standards.

The entering student is expected to:

- Receive, process, and comprehend text, oral presentation, numbers, and graphs displayed in print, lecture, and audio-visual formats and store information for self-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

Essential functions.

The enrolled student will:

- 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

Sensory- and movement-related functions

Technical standards.

The entering student is expected to:

- 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)

Essential functions.

The enrolled student will:

- 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

Communication and social interaction

Technical standards.

The entering student is expected to:

- Communicate meaning to others
- Demonstrate awareness of own non-verbal communication and interpretation by people
- Interpret verbal and nonverbal communication
- Produce concise, explicit, understandable, and legible written communication
- Communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written formats
- 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

Essential functions.

The enrolled student will:

- 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)
- 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