

Occupational Therapy Assistant Program



Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
Student Handbook

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MISSION STATEMENTS

McHenry County College Mission Statement

At McHenry County College, “Our focus is learning. Student success is our goal.”

OTA Program Mission Statement

The McHenry County College OTA Program will prepare individuals to function as entry-level certified occupational therapy assistants (OTA). Working in partnership with the occupational therapist and community stakeholders, graduates will successfully plan and implement goal-directed therapeutic occupations uniquely designed to help persons, groups, and populations to achieve optimal performance in their daily life roles.

OTA PROGRAM VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to be a transformative occupational therapy assistant program with a focus on an occupation-based curriculum tailored to the unique needs of diverse individuals, groups, and populations, while emphasizing excellence in interprofessional and intraprofessional collaboration, clinical reasoning, and community-based learning. We aspire to cultivate lifelong learners who, equipped with professional and ethical values, contribute meaningfully to society through advocacy and scholarship.

OTA Program Philosophical Statement

McHenry County College aligns with the 2017 Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy as outlined by the American Occupational Therapy Association. The occupational therapy assistant program delivers curriculum that is centered on the occupational nature of humans and their capacity to learn. Anchored in the Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) Model, the curriculum emphasizes a holistic understanding of the diverse needs of individuals, groups, and populations, exploring how motivation, occupational performance, and adaptive capacities interact with environmental influences to impact health, wellness, and life satisfaction. Students engage in a comprehensive study and application of occupation across the lifespan, while considering various influences on adaptive abilities and states of health. This prepares them to implement evidence-based occupational therapy services ethically, accommodating the unique needs of each consumer regardless of their experience of occupational disruption in any context. The learning environment is crafted to foster clinical reasoning, while utilizing transformative learning theory to address the unique needs of each consumer and promoting competence in entry-level practitioner skills through multi-modal and safe learning experiences. Students engage in foundational content, simultaneously participating in experiential learning in the classroom, community, and fieldwork, to apply theoretical concepts through personal and clinical exploration.

OTA CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

In fall of 2013, McHenry County College received accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE)[®]. The curriculum is designed to prepare students as generalists with a broad exposure to current and non-traditional practice settings. This includes preparing students to work with a variety of diagnoses within individuals, groups, and populations.

The content, scope and sequence of course offerings are informed primarily by two key resources, (1) the Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance Model and (2) the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process, 4th ed. (OTPF-4). The first conceptualizes a dynamic view of human occupational performance as it occurs and evolves throughout the lifespan. This lifespan view consequently encompasses the evolution of student to occupational therapy assistant professional. The OTPF-4 reflects the profession's current collective understanding of the scope of the profession of occupational therapy and the professional processes utilized to deliver all aspects of service within the profession. The application of the two foundational resources to this curriculum design is intended to result in McHenry County College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program graduates to develop sound, occupational-based practice, rooted in clinical reasoning, clinical application, community engagement and scholarship across cultural and diverse backgrounds in multiple practice environments.

Each class has a faculty/student ratio of 1:16 in lectures and lab sections. To enhance the educational experience, specific course assignments or activities may include additional faculty or clinicians to be present to ensure the safety and educational components of the activity.

OTA PROGRAM GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Institutional Goals:

1. Create accessible, high-impact student-focused services, interventions, and facilities that increase student engagement, completion, and career readiness.
2. Develop and execute transparent strategies for generating and sustaining financial resources necessary to drive College innovations and operations.
3. Deliver secure, cost-effective, and sustainable infrastructure and technology solutions to drive institutional innovation and empower a positive learning and work environment.
4. Attract, retain, engage, and value diverse and dynamic faculty, staff, and administrators who are committed to excellence in our ever-changing context.
5. Strengthen collaborations with the community and local industry to ensure that all College efforts are focused on improving the quality of life and economic development for those individuals who learn with us.
6. Inspire and challenge students in every learning experience through the careful professional expertise of faculty who engage and support students, and expect high levels of learning.

7. Articulate the College's key value propositions in order to strategically increase community engagement and support, improve enrollment, and prepare the next generation of learners.
8. Develop effective strategies in all our interactions with students and each other that welcome and value our diversity.

College General Education Goals

1. Critical Thinking-Students who graduate from MCC are critical thinkers. They are able to do the following things at a level appropriate for a 2-year degree holder.
 - Combine stated truths and facts to make arguments and develop new ideas
 - Interpret data and draw conclusions
 - Construct arguments supported with more than opinion
 - Recognize bias and act in ways that question assumptions
2. Effective Communication - Students who graduate from MCC are effective communicators. They are able to do the following things at a level appropriate for a 2-year degree holder.
 - Select from a variety of communication style based on the situation
 - Listen attentively
 - Adapt to audience and context in professional and/or personal interactions
3. Informational Literacy - Students who graduate from MCC are information literate. They are able to do the following things at a level appropriate for a 2-year degree holder.
 - Access multiple sources to provide sound evidence
 - Ensure information is of quality and use the information to accomplish an academic goal
 - Acknowledge where information is coming from and whom it belongs to
4. Professionalism - Students who graduate from MCC are professionals. They are able to do the following things at a level appropriate for a 2-year degree holder.
 - Speak and act honestly
 - Engage in courteous and culturally sensitive interactions
 - Present themselves and actions appropriately in professional environments (this includes in written form such as emails, in-person through timely and respectful interactions, and adherence to professional codes and standards).
 - Follow through on commitments.

OTA Program Outcomes

Graduates of the program will:

1. Occupation-Based Practice:
 - Students will apply a foundational understanding in occupation across interactions with all clients.
 - Students will promote the importance of occupation-based interventions with clients and external stakeholders.
2. Clinical Reasoning:
 - Students will develop clinical reasoning skills across lifespan and varied contexts.
 - Students will display proficiency in the analysis and integration of person, environment, occupation, and performance while fostering a holistic approach to client-centered care.
3. Clinical Application:
 - Students will develop and apply relevant interventions for persons, groups and populations.
 - Students will determine appropriate interventions across diverse contexts and needs of clients.
4. Community Engagement
 - Students will foster interprofessional and intraprofessional collaborative relationships to serve clients and the community.
 - Students will build connectedness with community needs and establish resources.
5. Scholarship
 - Students will develop self-directed learning skills for academic success and professional growth, seek resources, and engage in reflective practices independently.
 - Students will integrate evidence-based interventions into practice, to critically assess research, apply findings to client needs, and contribute to the delivery of high-quality, evidence-informed care.

CURRICULUM SAMPLE PATHWAY

Prerequisite Courses	Credit hours
ENG 151 - Composition I* or SPE 151 Introduction to Speech*	3
OTA 110 - Foundations of Occupational Therapy	2
PSY 151 - Introduction to Psychology	3
BIO 263 - Human Anatomy & Physiology I	4
BIO 264 - Human Anatomy & Physiology II	4
OR	
BIO 230 – Human Structure & Function	6
Total Credit Hours	14-16
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Semester One, Year One - Spring	
ENG 151 - Composition I* or SPE 151 Introduction to Speech*	3
AOM 135 - Medical Terminology**	3
OTA 120 - Therapeutic Methods I	3
OTA 130 - Occupations Across the Lifespan	4
OTA 140 - Dynamics of Human Movement	3
Total Credit Hours	16
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Semester Two, Year One - Fall	
OTA 150 - Conditions Disrupting Participation	3
OTA 160 - Psychosocial Rehab Theory & Methods	5
OTA 170 - Therapeutic Methods II	3
OTA 240 - Health Services Management	2
Total Credit Hours	13
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Semester Three, Year Two - Spring	
OTA 210 - Physical Theory & Rehab Methods	5
OTA 220 - Therapeutic Methods III	4
OTA 230 - Professional Analysis in Practice	3
Total Credit Hours	12
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Semester Four, Year Two - Fall	
OTA 250 - Professional Practice Seminar	2
OTA 260 - Level IIA Fieldwork	5
OTA 265 - Level IIB Fieldwork	5
Total Credit Hours	12
TOTAL PROGRAM CREDIT HOURS	70

*Both ENG 151 and SPE 151 are required for completion of the OTA degree; however, one of the two courses is required as a prerequisite before applying to the program.

**AOT 135 may be taken prior to admission to the program.

ABBREVIATED COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

OTA 110 – Foundations of Occupational Therapy – 2 Credits

Foundations of Occupational Therapy introduces the concepts of occupation, occupational performance, and occupational therapy as a health and wellness profession. Occupational therapy as a profession is explored by introducing methods used for intervening in disorders and conditions that disrupt occupational performance. The history of the profession and its current philosophy are examined as a means to understand the emergence of the occupational therapist and occupational therapy assistant roles and their professional collaboration.

OTA 120 – Therapeutic Methods I – 3 credits

Therapeutic Methods I presents a unique approach of occupational therapy to use occupations and activities as therapeutic interventions. Skills learned include analysis of activities and their application to client needs in order to enhance occupational performance. Students will demonstrate beginning documentation skills through experiential learning in actual practice settings. Level I Fieldwork hours are included in the course.

OTA 130 - Occupations Across the Lifespan – 4 credits

Occupations Across the Lifespan includes observation, analysis, and performance of human occupation in the domains of work, self-care, education, and play/leisure throughout the lifespan. The course content emphasizes interpersonal communication, activity analysis and an introduction to the use of professional language and terms. The course examines the intrinsic value in human occupations and builds the basic skills necessary for teaching activities. Emphasis is on creative and critical thinking and strategies to develop self as an agent of change in the therapeutic process.

OTA 140 – Dynamics of Human Movement – 3 credits

Dynamics of Human Movement studies of the organization of the brain, spinal cord, peripheral nerves, and joints of the trunk, and upper extremity and lower extremity of the human body. Students explore the interrelationship among the central nervous system, peripheral nervous system, and musculoskeletal system and analysis of functional movement required for work, self-care, and play.

OTA 150 – Conditions Disrupting Participation – 3 credits

Conditions Disrupting Participation introduces many of the clinical conditions that are encountered in occupational therapy practice, including an overview of various diagnoses including the etiology, incidence, signs and symptoms, management and prognosis of each condition. Students learn to evaluate the impact of the condition on an individual's ability to engage in areas of occupation. Research and information retrieval are introduced as skills needed for future coursework and professional practice.

OTA 160 – Psychosocial Rehabilitation Theory & Methods – 5 credits

Psychosocial Rehabilitation Theory & Methods presents the principles and practice of observing, assessing, documenting, teaching, adapting, and grading self-care, work, education, and play/leisure for individuals with psychological, cognitive and social challenges. Students explore contexts of

culture and spirituality in relation to human occupation. Level I Fieldwork hours are included in the course.

OTA 170 – Therapeutic Methods II - 3 credits

Therapeutic Methods II focuses on simulated assessment and intervention strategies with demonstration strategies for fieldwork. Students demonstrate service competency for necessary skills including principles of problem-solving identification, treatment implementation, activity adaptation and the use of assistive technologies for individuals with difficulty in occupational performance.

OTA 210 – Physical Theory and Rehab Methods – 5 credits

Physical Theory and Rehab Methods explores principles and practice of observing, assessing, documenting, teaching, adapting, and grading self-care, work, and play/leisure for individuals with physical challenges. Techniques and equipment that maximize participation in meaningful occupations, improve independence, assure safety, and prevent deformity are emphasized. Students examine ethical, critical and clinical reasoning, considerations of culture and environment as an integral component of occupational therapy assistant practice. Level I Fieldwork hours are included in the course.

OTA 220 – Therapeutic Methods III – 4 credits

Therapeutic Methods III focuses on intervention for occupational performance challenges due to disrupted client factors associated with impaired motor and process skills such as cognitive-perceptual functioning, sensory processing, and neuromusculoskeletal functions. Students learn facility-based and community-based interventions used by the OTA in the area of assessment, planning, implementation of treatment programs and service discontinuation, with emphasis on use of meaningful occupation and understanding of individual performance contexts and patterns.

OTA 230 - Professional Analysis in Practice – 3 credits

Professional Analysis in Practice is a seminar course utilizing case inquiry approaches in order to solidify understanding of professional reasoning, communication and self-reflection. Students work in small groups, using evidenced-based approaches to interpret, analyze and strategize varied intervention options.

OTA 240 - Health Services Management – 2 credits

Health Services Management explores basic management and support tasks relevant to the role of the occupational therapy assistant including ethical principles in the workplace, the roles and functions of regulatory agencies, funding and reimbursement systems, and health care delivery systems. The role of the occupational therapy assistant in program development is experientially explored.

OTA 250 Professional Practice Seminar– 2 credits

Professional Practice Seminar is the examination of professional issues, the role of agencies and associations that support and regulate occupational therapy practice, and advocacy roles of the occupational therapy assistant. Topics include preparation activities for Level II Fieldwork,

licensure and certification, employment acquisition, and development of a professional development plan. NOTE: This is a blended course and will require access to the internet.

OTA 260 – Fieldwork Level IIA – 5 credits

Fieldwork Level IIA provides a minimum of nine weeks of supervised experience practicing the skills of an entry-level occupational therapy assistant. Students are assigned to a setting where they receive practical experience integrating and applying knowledge and skills to a consumer population that offers a diversity of clinical experience from that offered in OTA 265. OTA 260 and OTA 265 must be completed within 18 months from the date of completion of the academic portion of the program.

OTA 265– Fieldwork Level IIB – 5 credits

Fieldwork Level IIB is a minimum of nine weeks of supervised experience practicing the skills of an entry-level occupational therapy assistant. Students are assigned to a setting where they receive practical experience integrating and applying knowledge and skills to a consumer population that offers a diversity of clinical experience from that offered in OTA 260. OTA 260 and OTA 265 must be completed within 18 months from the date of completion of the academic portion of the program.

OTA Curricular Threads

	Occupation-based Practice	Clinical Reasoning	Clinical Application	Community Engagement	Scholarship
Pre-Requisite Courses					
OTA 110 Foundations of Occupational Therapy	x	x			
Semester One					
OTA 120 Therapeutic Methods I	x	x			x
OTA 130 Occupations Across the Lifespan		x			
OTA 140 Dynamics of Human Movement		x	x		
Semester Two					
OTA 150 Conditions Disrupting Participation	x	x			x
OTA 160 Psychosocial Rehab Theory & Methods	x	x	x	x	x
OTA 170 Therapeutic Methods II	x	x	x	x	x
OTA 240 Health Services Management		x	x	x	
Semester Three					
OTA 210 Physical Theory & Rehab Methods	x	x	x		
OTA 220 Therapeutic Methods III	x	x	x	x	x
OTA 230 Professional Analysis in Practice	x	x		x	x
Semester Four					
OTA 250 Professional Practice Seminar	x	x	x		x
OTA 260 Fieldwork Level IIA	x	x	x	x	x
OTA 265 Fieldwork Level IIB	x	x	x	x	x

BASIC FUNCTIONS FOR AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT

The following is a list of basic functions that are necessary for a student to be able to complete while in the program and completing the various levels of fieldwork to complete the Applied Associates degree of Science in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. Students who have concerns with performing the following tasks in their education, need to contact the Program Director and make an appointment with [Access and Disability Services](#) to determine reasonable modifications under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students need to remember the role of an OTA in the various settings and fields of practice to be an effective OTA after completion of the program.

A student must be able to:

1. Sit in class and complete various required movements up to 6-8 hours a day without risk of injury to self or others.
2. Move with adequate reflexive control and balance to ensure client safety that may or may not use equipment, while preventing injury to client and self.
3. Demonstrating the sensory motor skills, mobility, and general endurance necessary to effectively and safely complete all learning tasks, contributes to the occupational therapy intervention techniques in the academic and fieldwork environments.
4. Use visual, auditory, and tactile senses to observe clients to collect and interpret data.
5. Read and understand client charts, professional literature, notes from clients, family members, physicians, and other health professionals.
6. Respond to warning signals and calls for help or assistance.
7. Communicate effectively and clearly in English (using professional terminology) in both verbal and written formats with faculty, peers, clients, families, and other health professionals through appropriate documentation.
8. Acquire and demonstrate educational information while applying the knowledge of occupational therapy principle and practice.
9. Behave in an ethical, legal and professional manner in the classroom and in the clinic setting at all times.
10. Modify one's own behavior and performance with appropriate response, to feedback from instructors, fieldwork educators, and peers to promote growth in learning.

PROGRAM ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Admissions Requirements

The MCC OTA Policies and Procedures for admissions into the program can be found at: <https://www.mchenry.edu/ota/admission.html>

- A grade of C or better is required for all prerequisite courses: ENG 151, SPE 151, PSY 151, BIO 230 or BIO 263 and BIO 264 (or equivalent). The biology courses must be completed within 5 years of admittance into the program.
- The cumulative GPA for the prerequisite courses of at least 2.75.
- Completion of the online application which can be found on the [OTA Admission website](#).
- Completion of written essay.
- Completion of group interview process.
- Individuals must be an admitted student to MCC and have a MCC student ID number to apply to the Occupational Therapy Assistant program. If an applicant has never attended MCC as a credit student, a MCC Admissions Form and applicable fee must be submitted online at www.mchenry.edu/apply or at the Registration Office, Room A258.
- Advanced Placement credit for prerequisite courses follows MCC policies. Please contact the [MCC Admissions Office](#) to initiate the process.
- Credits earned at other regionally accredited colleges/universities for transfer to McHenry County College can be evaluated by sending official transcripts from the institutions you previously attended to the Admissions office. Transcripts emailed by students are considered unofficial.
 - If you attended more than one institution, coursework at each institution is evaluated independently. An official transcript must be requested from each institution. Official transcripts may be:
 - Submitted by your previous institution directly to MCC through secure transcript services such as the National Student Clearinghouse or Parchment
 - Dropped off in-person in A260*
 - Mailed to MCC admission at 8900 U.S. Hwy 14, Crystal Lake, IL 60012*
- *Transcripts must remain sealed in the original envelope as provided by the issuing institution to be considered official
- The MCC OTA Program does not accept transfer credit for occupational therapy courses from other institutions, experiential learning credit, or work experience credit.

Criteria for Selection

The number of students that can be accepted into the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is limited; therefore, admission is competitive, and a rubric is utilized to maintain an objective admissions process. The process is designed to select the most holistic and well-rounded students and takes into account GPA, completion of prerequisite courses, residency of the student, life experience or familiarity with occupational therapy, and written and verbal communication skills. Minimal preference is given to residents of McHenry County College District #528; however, applicants outside of the district are highly encouraged to apply.

Notification of Acceptance

Students are notified by email and mail of their acceptance into the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. Email and letters are sent to all applicants a week after final grades are posted of the mandatory prerequisite courses taken in fall semester. Student applicants must respond via email within 1 week of their acceptance to be enrolled in the OTA courses. If there are more qualified applicants than class space available, applicants will be placed on a waiting list for that admissions year and will be placed as space becomes available. Students that do not make it into the program will need to reapply for the following year. Applications will not be carried over from one year to the next.

Additional Requirements: Health, Legal, and CPR

Once accepted into the OTA program, students are required to provide proof of the following medical and legal clearance to participate in the OTA program at MCC:

- Current physical exam within one year of starting program
- Proof of current immunizations
 - MMR (Rubeola, Rubella, Mumps)
 - Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis)
 - Chicken Pox (Varicella)
 - Flu (Influenza)
 - Hepatitis B (may decline but may impact FW location options)
 - COVID-19
- Two-step TB test or bloodwork or clear chest x-ray for TB treatment
- Criminal background check
- Drug Screen
- Current American Heart Association Basic Life Support with AED certification
- Health insurance throughout the enrollment period of the program

The medical forms and details about the background checks are distributed at the mandatory information session for new OTA students and those on the waiting list. Please check the Canvas for due dates of this information. Certain fieldwork sites may require additional medical, fingerprinting, and/or drug testing requirements and may be at the expense of the student.

Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks

Some clinical education sites may require the student to complete a drug test and fingerprinting or supply the results of a criminal background check. Students may be responsible for costs associated with these tests. Students are encouraged to ask about these tests and to obtain information on avoiding ingesting anything that could cause a false positive result on a drug test. Students who present with positive results without documentation of medical necessity will not be allowed to begin or continue in the program. The student may apply for readmission and/or re-entry after one year pending evidence of subsequent treatment, counseling and negative drug screen. Refusal by a student to submit to testing will result in that student's dismissal from the program. If indicated, instructions for completion of the drug screening process will be supplied by the McHenry County College OTA Program.

McHenry County College does not rely on drug test results to deny access to academic programs for any student who is 21 or over. However, fieldwork locations may require a drug test to allow students to participate in a partner facility. A positive test result may eliminate a student from participating in a fieldwork location and may not allow a student to continue the course or program.

Criminal background checks will be performed by the vendor hired by the college. Students will also be screened for clearance on the sex offender registry and child abuse clearance.

Impaired Students

If, in the judgment of the instructor, the student's ability to function safely in the clinical area is impaired, the student will be immediately removed. The instructor will document the incident and report it to the Program Director. A copy of the Report of Student Update will be incorporated into the student's file. Once documentation is completed, the student will be placed on an action plan by the OTA department to determine reasonable actions to be taken.

Medical Conditions and Use of Prescribed Medications

The student must provide signed documentation from the prescribing practitioner to attend and participate in clinical activities without restriction. It is the student's responsibility to determine from a physician or nurse practitioner whether a medically prescribed drug or medical condition may affect clinical performance.

COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES

Students follow the OTA Student Handbook and Fieldwork Manual for various aspects of the OTA program found online, via the OTA website at www.mchenry.edu/ota/. Additional MCC student academic policies can be found at <http://www.mchenry.edu/policy/>. OTA students also follow the MCC Student Code of Conduct found in the MCC McHenry County College catalog and online at <http://www.mchenry.edu/conduct/>.

Emergency notification system: <https://www.getrave.com/login/mchenry> This notification system will notify student via email, phone call or text message when the college is closed. It is highly recommended for every student to sign up. This is the best way to have the most up-to-date information.

The MCC OTA program strives to create a space of belonging, collaboration, and respect for each other and the learning environment. Instructors and students are expected to act in a responsible mature manner that reflects the qualities, reliability, and responsible interpersonal skills. These skills include, but are not limited to: using critical thinking skills in determining one's actions in the clinical and classroom setting; accepting responsibility for one's own actions, including preparing sufficiently for class and clinical; taking exams as scheduled and completing assignments on time, including patient/client care; responding appropriately and in a timely fashion to constructive criticism and feedback from faculty, clinical site, staff and peers; giving prior notification in writing or voicemail to faculty if unable to meeting commitments and following up with faculty regarding potential make up requirements; dealing with others (peers, faculty, staff, patients/clients and their families) in an honest, respectful, sensitive and non-judgmental manner that communicates respect

for individual differences; respecting others' space and time through the demonstration of such actions as responsible use of technology, avoiding disruptive sidebar conversations, and refraining from texting others in class and clinical settings.

Profanity, derogatory comments, and emotional responses which inhibit learning will not be permitted. Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to: to willfully or intentionally do physical and/or mental harm to a client or peer; to refuse to assume the assigned and necessary care of a client or failure to inform the instructor with immediacy when changes to clinical assignments are necessary; to discuss confidential information in inappropriate areas, such as elevators or the cafeteria; to discuss confidential information about a client with third parties who do not have a clear and legitimate need to know; or inattentiveness to classroom work.

Social media constitutes the use of, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, email and blogging. Use of social media is permitted, but only in a professional manner that adheres to the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics. All students must be aware that there is no such thing as "private social media" and must be cognizant of an unattended audience viewing any postings. Any of the following will be considered a violation of this policy: no names, identifiers or any information leading to the identification of any patient may be referenced; no photos may be taken with any electronic device at the clinical site or of any experiential learning activity with clients; the use of social media during class, lab or clinical is prohibited; derogatory statements toward other students, faculty or employees of clinical sites are prohibited; professional boundaries with patients or previous patients in the online environment must be adhered to; confidential information regarding an exam, assignment, or quiz may not be shared; any other evidence of unprofessional behavior using media; clinical experiences are not to be discussed on ANY social network.

Additionally, honesty is expected of all OTA students both in the classroom and clinical settings. Acts of lying, cheating, plagiarism, forgery, alteration and/or falsification of clinical documents, written work, or academic records will lead to failure of a course. In addition, the student's actions may be subject to review by the [MCC Student Conduct Board](#).

OTA PROGRAM SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Students are responsible for thoughtful care of all equipment utilized in lab instruction. Any student willfully damaging equipment will be financially responsible for repair or replacement. If equipment is accidentally damaged and a student causes or discovers it, and reports it to the instructor, the student will not be financially responsible. The OTA program is responsible for maintaining a safe environment for students in the lab and during completion of other educational activities. All equipment will be inspected at the beginning of a semester where it is used and again prior to use in classroom instruction. Students will receive instruction in proper use of equipment prior to utilizing it in a learning activity with peers.

Toxic and/or aerosol materials will be used only in open, well-ventilated spaces. Protective coverings will be used on all surfaces. The MSDS book is kept in the classroom and lab room for chemical information on specific chemicals.

General Laboratory & Clinical Safety

Universal Precautions

During classroom lab activities, hand hygiene is performed between sessions of working with different class members or faculty members. Hand sanitizer is provided in the classroom and gloves are worn if a student or instructor has unhealed skin lesions on his or her hands. All used gloves must be disposed of in a container for regulated waste. In the event that any surface in the lab becomes contaminated with body fluids, appropriate cleanup procedures will be implemented, including any needed assistance from maintenance personnel.

Students will receive instruction and assessment in Universal Precautions in OTA 150. Documentation of acceptable knowledge and skill is maintained in Canvas.

Infection Control

The program is responsible for maintaining a safe and healthy environment for students and faculty while in the classroom setting and during any relevant learning activities. General cleaning and maintenance procedures, performed on a regular basis, include the following:

- The classroom area will be cleaned and maintained in accordance with the policy developed by McHenry County College.
- Program equipment should be cleaned with an antiseptic solution available in the classroom; this includes all mat tables, wheelchairs, canes, walkers, tub benches, therapy balls, etc.
- Linens used in class will not be reused until they are laundered.
- Kitchen equipment is to be washed, dried and put away following classroom use.

College Safety Policies

The McHenry County College safety policies and procedures addressing emergency procedures, reporting of incidents, fire procedures, building evacuations, tornadoes and bomb threats can be found on the [MCC Campus Police Emergency Procedures website](#).

STUDENT SERVICES

MCC supports the development of the whole student who are in-person or online. In keeping with this philosophy, the college offers a wide range of student services and promotes responsible participation in student life activities. As resources continue to evolve and develop, the following highlights of the resources available to all on-campus and off-campus MCC students. Student Success maintains and updates the current list of services available at the re found at the [Student Success website](#).

Access and Disability Services

ADS is the office on campus designated to provide reasonable accommodations for otherwise qualified students and community members with disabilities. We partner with instructors, staff, student organizations, and community partners to make MCC a more accessible and inclusive

environment for all students and community members. Students with documented disabilities are eligible for Access and Disability Services. Some students in occupational programs, who are English Language Learners, or have other barriers to education may also qualify for accommodations. [Access and Disability](#)

Athletics & Fitness Center

To learn more about the athletics program: [Athletics](#)

The Fitness Center is 2,800 square feet with a selection of weight training machines, treadmills, stair machines, cycles, and other cardiovascular equipment. The award-winning fitness program consists of friendly staff, comfortable atmosphere, and a comprehensive and sophisticated personalized delivery system. The Fitness Center provides both credit and non-credit use. The hours of operation for the Fitness Center are published in both credit and Continuing Education course schedules and are also available on the MCC website. [MCC's Fitness Center](#)

Bookstore

McHenry County College has a bookstore [MCC Bookstore](#) on campus where the students are able to purchase required paper or digital textbooks and supplemental supplies for various courses in the curriculum. Students may buy or rent the textbooks depending on their preference for each course.

Career Services

The Career Services Office provides career development preparation and resources for students, alumni, and community residents. In addition, Career Services staff works closely with employers to coordinate internships, develop apprenticeships, and meet their part-time and full-time hiring needs. [MCC's Career Services](#)

Children's Learning Center

The Children's Learning Center (CLC) provides a positive learning environment for young children of students and employees, in addition to being a lab site for MCC's Early Childhood Education Program. The CLC is state licensed and has grants available for affordable childcare for students. [Children's Learning Center](#)

Diversity and Inclusion

The Office of Student Diversity and Inclusion provides direct student support services and coordinates individual and group activities to promote integration into the college environment and academic success. <https://www.mchenry.edu/diversity/>

Financial Aid

MCC is committed to helping remove economic barriers that may deprive students of an education. For this purpose, numerous financial aid options are available to assist students in their quest for higher education. <http://www.mchenry.edu/financialaid/>

Information Technology Assistance

The Tech Department at MCC is available for on campus and off campus students for assistance such as resetting passwords, wifi assistance, Office 365 or basic Canvas assistance. Please check

your Canvas courses for more detailed information regarding Canvas assistance.

<https://www.mchenry.edu/tech/>

Library

The MCC Library provides the resources (books, journals, CDs, DVDs, electronic materials, research databases) and services (research assistance, instruction, interlibrary loan) which meet the information needs of the college community. They teach library patrons to find, evaluate, and use information effectively and support intellectual freedom, inquiry, and lifelong learning.

<http://www.mchenry.edu/library/>

Mental Health Services

Mental health resources are available if you should you need assistance with life circumstances that may interfere with your learning and success at MCC. There are resources for online counseling services and comprehensive community mental health resources. [Mental Health Services at MCC](#)

Sage Learning Center

The Sage Learning Center <http://www.mchenry.edu/sage/> is a general tutoring center for all registered students seeking assistance in a variety of academic subject areas. They offer in-person and online tutoring. Comprehensive support is provided in math and in English/writing. The center also provides assistance wherever possible in many other courses. Tutoring is delivered by professional and peer tutors on both a drop-in and appointment basis and in both individual and group formats depending on the subject. Computer assisted instruction, supplemental instruction, study groups, and a resource library are also available. [Tutor Me](#) is an online tutoring platform for students to access on and off campus. The Sage Center also has Learning and Retention Specialists available on and off campus, who can work with students on time-management, organization, and other executive functioning skills.

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

Grades on Individual Assignments

Students receiving a grade below C on an exam or assignment will be required to meet with the faculty member to ensure knowledge has been obtained at a satisfactory level. Evaluation of this knowledge can be in the form of discussion, or additional assignments. The earned grade will not be changed. These advisement meetings will be documented with the Student Update form and placed in the student file. The following will be used a guideline for assigning grades

93 – 100	A
84 – 92.99	B
75 – 83.99	C
70 – 74.99	D
69.99 or below	F

Grades will not be rounded in any course.

The following is how the OTA program will maintain records and grades for the program:

- All records will remain in a locked cabinet in the Health Sciences office.
- Records in relation to transcripts and fieldwork will be retained by the college permanently.
- Fieldwork records will be maintained throughout the OTA program.
- Transcripts will be maintained by the college with the Registrar's office.
- Copies of exams and fieldwork assignments will be maintained through each accreditation cycle to enhance documentation of curriculum.
- All records will be disposed of according to MCC's guidelines of discarding confidential information.

Applications of students who were not accepted into the program will be disposed of according to MCC's guidelines for confidential information, a year after the application time frame.

Student Advisement

To encourage student success in the OTA program, OTA students are required to meet each semester for a Midterm Advisory Meeting to discuss and review their fieldwork information and courses with a faculty member from the OTA program. This encourages the student to have a one-on-one time with faculty to discuss any concerns the student may express about his or her progress in the program. This meeting is documented with the Midterm Advisory Meeting form. Students may arrange additional advising meetings with a faculty member as needed to provide greater clarification and/or assistance throughout the program. Each full-time faculty has established office hours and will arrange to meet with a student outside of office hours when requested.

If students have exams and/or assignments that are completed as part of the grade and expectation of the course and/or class with a grade below 75%, the student will meet with the instructor to determine if the knowledge and concept was understood by the student. A Student Update form will be completed to document these meetings. For concerns during fieldwork, an Action Plan will be created and implemented between the student, fieldwork coordinator, and fieldwork educator. Students are entitled to a copy of the documentation and any plan made and agreed to by the student and the faculty advisor. Documentation is maintained in each student's locked file.

Grades/Dismissal

Once a student has been admitted into the OTA program, the student may continue to enroll in each successive semester of OTA courses until the student finishes the program, provided a grade of A, B, or C is earned in each course. Grades of D, F, I, or W are not considered passing. A student who does not earn a grade of C or better in a course will be dismissed from the program. The student may petition to repeat the course the next time the course is offered. A student must complete a written letter stating that they request to return and deliver it to the OTA Program Director.

Students must maintain an overall GPA of a 2.0 or better in order to progress in the program.

A student who has failed any two OTA program courses or has failed the same OTA course or fieldwork twice, will be dismissed from the program without the ability to petition for re-entry. Students will only be given approval to withdrawal from an OTA course once due to life circumstances. Students with egregious violations of academic integrity or professional behaviors may be dismissed from the program without an option to reapply. The process for appeal for these

types of offenses is found in the OTA Student Handbook. Additional information on student conduct can be located at <http://www.mchenry.edu/conduct/>.

Students are required to maintain the appropriate levels of conduct on and off campus. They are to maintain appropriate levels ethics and professionalism throughout classroom and fieldwork experiences. Students may be dismissed from the program, but are not limited to:

1. Unprofessional or dishonest behavior
2. Actions which put a patient/client safety at risk
3. Infractions of clinical facility policy

Once a concern for unprofessional behavior is determined, the OTA Director will gather and review the facts related to the concern and the OTA program faculty will discuss and determine the appropriate sanction including dismissal. If warranted, the student may be removed from the program and be presented with a letter stating that he or she is dismissed from the program. Any student which is dismissed from the program for unprofessional behaviors will not be permitted to attend any further OTA classes at MCC.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

For any issue a student encounters that they wish to appeal, including but not limited to clinical failure, course grade, or behavioral issues, the student must attempt to resolve this issue first informally in a professional manner and then, if the issue is not resolved the student should initiate a formal complaint.

If the concern related to the program is specific to an individual faculty member, the student should address their concern with that individual.

If the student does not feel that their concern was heard or addressed, the student should discuss their concern with the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director. If the concern is related to the program as a whole, the student should start with the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director. The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director may meet with the student and the faculty member to address the concern. Concerns related to Level I and Level II Fieldwork should also be addressed with the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator at the time the concern occurs.

The student will send a written appeal to the course faculty member within 5 business days of receiving the grade or written warning. A meeting of the student and faculty member to discuss the issue is encouraged but not required.

The faculty member will send a written response to student within ten business days. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the prior step, the student may choose to proceed to the next level.

If the student's appeal is denied, the student may appeal to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director within 5 days of receiving the faculty member's response by including the following information in writing to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director:

- Their original appeal to the faculty member
- The faculty member's response
- Additional facts not available at the time of the initial appeal

After appropriate fact finding, the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director will notify the student of his/her decision in writing within ten business days.

If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the prior step, the student may appeal to the Dean of Health Services within 5 days of receiving the Director's response by including the following information in writing to the Dean of Health Services:

- Their original appeal to the faculty member and the response
- Their original appeal to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director and their response
- Additional facts not available at the time of the appeal to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director

After fact finding, the Dean of Health Services will notify the student of his/her decision via secure in writing within 10 business days. If the student chooses, they may appeal the process to the VP of Student Affairs and Workforce Development following the procedures located in the college handbook <https://www.mchenry.edu/catalog/front.pdf>

Qualifications for Level II Fieldwork

Students must have completed all of the didactic course work with a grade of C or better, have a GPA of a 2.0 or better and must be approved by the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Director to progress to Level II Fieldwork courses. Both Fieldwork Level II courses (OTA 260 and OTA 265) must be completed within 18 months of the completion of didactic course work.

Graduation Requirements

- Cumulative GPA of 2.00/4.0 or greater for all required courses
- Successful completion of Level IA & IB Fieldwork placements.
- Successful completion of Fieldwork Level II (OTA 260 and OTA 265) within 18 months of completion of the didactic portion of the program.
- 15 semester hours of program specific coursework taken at MCC
- Completion of intent to graduate form
- Completion of end-of-program assessment as directed by the department

LENGTH OF PROGRAM

Once the applicant is accepted into the OTA program, it is a two-year, four-semester program. If a student needs to repeat a semester or takes a leave of absence due to documented medical or personal reasons, the length of the program may be extended by up to 12 months; extending the program length to three years. The extension limitation is in the interest of knowledge currency. Both Fieldwork Level II courses (OTA 260 and OTA 265) must be completed within 18 months of the completion of didactic course work. A leave of absence or repeating a semester may only be requested one time during the duration of the OTA program.

RE-ENTRY PETITION PROCESS

Students who have been dismissed from the program due to not passing an OTA course or a requested leave of absence based on documented medical leave or personal reasons will be allowed to petition for re-entry into the program. The student may petition to repeat the course the next time the course is offered. Students who do not follow through on the petition and action plan will not be allowed to re-enter the program. The petition is a letter written by the student stating his or her request to re-enter the OTA program. The letter is to be given to the OTA Program Director.

Re-entry into the program sequence will be based upon space availability at the time of petitioning. Process for demonstrating continued compliance of material already covered will be tailored to the individual's needs, and may include, but not limited to the following: Repeating a course, tutoring, or skills lab before returning to course sequence. If a student requests re-entry due to illness or injury, the student's physician or nurse practitioner must release a student and give consent for him or her to continue in the curriculum.

If re-entry is granted, students will complete an action plan to document step-by-step requirements and results if the action plan is not completed. The action plan is completed between the OTA Program Director and student working together to create a successful student-centered plan.

Employment

Balancing employment with the demands of the OTA program is very difficult. The student is expected to be alert in both class and in clinical for academic success and client safety. Clinical and classroom expectations and schedules will not be altered to accommodate student employment.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CODE OF ETHICS AND ETHICS STANDARDS (2020)

The MCC OTA program utilizes the [AOTA Code of Ethics](#) within the curriculum and application in interventions and professional interactions.

NATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

By the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy

Graduates of an accredited/ approved entry-level occupational therapy assistant program are eligible to sit for the certification exam. Information related to the process can be found at <https://www.nbcot.org/en/Students/get-certified>

Testing Process and Application

The certification examination is administered at Pearson Testing Centers.

Eligible candidates must apply for authorization to take the examination by completing the NBCOT® Certification Examination Application online. Once approval is granted, the eligible candidate will receive an Authorization to Test (AT) letter with information related to scheduling the examination time with Pearson. The approval letter is active for 90 days. Eligible candidates

must take the exam within 90 days of approval letter. Further information is provided in OTA 250 regarding details of the exam.

Eligibility Requirements

- Graduating with an accredited/approved entry-level occupational therapy assistant associate's degree from an ACOTE accredited program. An official final college or university transcript must indicate the date of graduation and degree title or NBCOT® Academic Credential Verification Form (ACVF)
- Agreeing to abide by the NBCOT® Practice Standards and Code of Conduct
- Receive a character review approval through NBCOT®. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT® certification examination or attain state licensure. Please consult the [NBCOT® Handbook](#) for further clarification.

Testing Accommodations

In adherence with the Americans with Disabilities Act, NBCOT® provides reasonable and appropriate testing accommodations for exam applicants with disabilities who are otherwise eligible to take the OTR® or COTA® certification examination in the United States. Visit <https://www.nbcot.org/exam/accommodations> for additional information related to accommodations for the exam.

STATE LICENSURE

Occupational therapy assistant students should always know state licensing laws, especially while on fieldwork experiences. OTA students need to be aware that state licensing laws differ and regardless of the state in which the student resides or the school resides, the student is responsible for the state practice act in the state in which they are completing fieldwork.

When preparing to take the national certification exam, also prepare yourself for state licensure. While the application process may be different from state to state, all states require successful completion of educational requirements, both academic and fieldwork, and successful completion of the certification examination. Many states have limited ability to practice prior to successful completion of the certification examination and/or limited practice while awaiting the licensing application to be processed.

The OTA program at MCC will provide more detailed information about licensure and application process before the end of your last semester. The last day of OTA 250 is designed to provide knowledge on the application process for the state of Illinois and educational requirements for NBCOT® upon official graduation from the accredited OTA program at MCC.

OTA PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

The Occupational Therapy Assistant program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Ave, Suite 510E, Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-6611 and its web address is www.acoteonline.org