

**University of Wisconsin-La Crosse**  
**College of Science and Health**



**Occupational Therapy Program**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2025-2027**



The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program is a regionally recognized program, grounded in ***foundational sciences, hands-on learning, and community engagement.*** Graduates serve as entry level ***leaders and team members*** in the community. UWL occupational therapy graduates are committed to providing quality ***evidence-based*** services individualized to facilitate ***quality of life, wellness, and participation*** throughout all ***populations.***

UWL Occupational Therapy Mission Statement – Rev. 5/2023

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**Note:** This student handbook is revised annually. It is the responsibility of the student to review the current handbook and policies which are available on the program website. Current students will be notified of any significant handbook revisions, which may require additional acknowledgement signatures.

## **SECTION A**

### **OVERVIEW OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROFESSION, EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALING**

#### **A-1: Philosophy of Occupational Therapy of the Occupational Therapy Education and Learning as Guided by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)**

The faculty of the UWL Occupational Therapy Program adopt and embrace the following American Occupational Therapy Association's (AOTA) philosophy of Occupational Therapy (AOTA, 2017). The Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy states:

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

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

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

Occupational therapy is based on the belief that occupations are fundamental to health promotion and wellness, remediation or restoration, health maintenance, disease and injury prevention, and compensation and adaptation. The use of occupation to promote individual, family, community, and population health is the core of occupational therapy practice, education, research, and advocacy. (p.1)

## A-2: Statement of Beliefs about Human Beings and Learning as guided by the American Occupational Therapy Association

The faculty of the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program embrace the American Occupational Therapy Association's *Philosophy of Occupational Therapy* (2017) and *Philosophy of Occupational Therapy Education* (2018). We support that participation in occupation leads to health, well-being and identity. Students are supported and encouraged to maintain occupational balance throughout graduate school with supportive services.

Aligned with these foundational beliefs, we recognize that our students are occupational beings whose learning is influenced by their individual backgrounds, lived experiences, motivations, and engagement in meaningful educational activities. We believe that active participation in learning—through doing, reflecting, and applying—promotes deeper understanding, critical thinking, professional identity development, and lifelong learning.

We affirm the following beliefs about how humans learn through guidance from the experiential and transformative learning theories (Kolb & Kolb, 2017; Taylor & Hamdy, 2013)

- Learning is an active, engaging, and transformative process that occurs within and beyond the classroom.
- Effective learning builds on prior knowledge and experiences and is enhanced through reflection, self-awareness, and feedback.
- Motivation and learning are strengthened when activities are purposeful, meaningful, and connected to real-world applications.
- Learning thrives in environments that support occupational balance and student well-being.
- Faculty play a critical role as experienced facilitators and mentors supporting various student learning styles.

### References:

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- Taylor, D. & Hamdy, H. (2013). Adult learning theories: Implications for learning and teaching in medical education: AMEE Guide No. 83. *Medical Teacher*, 35, e1561-e1572.  
<https://doi.org/10.3109/0142159X.2013.828153>

### A-3: Education, Accreditation, Certification, Licensing and Job Market

#### Education

Occupational therapists can complete entry level degrees at Master's or Doctoral levels. The University of WI-La Crosse program is a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) degree which includes coursework with strong foundational science focus, hands on clinical application of skills, clinical reasoning and research. Program length is a total of 18 months on campus completing face to face instruction, followed by 24 weeks of Level II Fieldwork experience, for a total of 24 months.

#### Accreditation

The University of WI-La Crosse is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The Occupational Therapy Program has been accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) since 2000, which qualifies graduates of this program for eligibility for the occupational therapy certification exam. The program is due for re- accreditation for the 2025-2026 academic year and will be participating in a site visit in June 2026.

#### Certification, Credentialing, and Licensing

Following successful completion of coursework and Fieldwork Experiences, students will graduate with a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy degree (MSOT). After graduation, students are eligible to sit for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) certification examination. Information regarding requirements can be found in the NBCOT certification exam handbook at:

[https://www.nbcot.org/-/media/PDFs/Cert\\_Exam\\_Handbook.pdf](https://www.nbcot.org/-/media/PDFs/Cert_Exam_Handbook.pdf)

Exams are taken electronically and administered at Prometric Test Centers (PTCs) worldwide.

After passing the national board examination, students are then eligible for state licensure, which is required for practice in each state. Requirements for state licensure differ across states. Please contact individual state licensing agencies for specifics. Students may not practice until they have been granted a state license.

#### Job Market

Occupational therapists work in a variety of settings and populations including hospitals, clinics, private clinics, school systems, and client's homes, among others. Therapists may work as clinicians, consultants, policy administration, research and academia. In 2023, The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



reported a 12% job growth outlook with a median salary of \$96, 370. US News best jobs rank occupational therapists as #4 in Best Health Care Jobs.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. (2024). *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Occupational Therapists*. Retrieved May 07, 2024 from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapists.htm>.

## **SECTION B**

### **PROGRAM AND INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **B-1: University and Occupational Therapy Mission and Vision**

##### University of WI-La Crosse Mission

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse provides a challenging, dynamic, and diverse learning environment in which the entire university community is fully engaged in supporting student success. Grounded in the liberal arts, UWL fosters curiosity and life-long learning through collaboration, innovation, and the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge. Acknowledging and respecting the contributions of all, UWL is a regional academic and cultural center that prepares students to take their place in a constantly changing world community. The university offers undergraduate programs and degrees in the arts and humanities, health and sciences, education, and business administration. The university offers graduate programs related to areas of emphasis and strength within the institution, including business administration, education, health, the sciences, and the social sciences.

##### University of WI-La Crosse Graduate Studies Mission

A graduate education at UW-La Crosse fosters in students an advanced understanding of disciplinary and professional content, along with skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, leadership, and communication. Graduate faculty and students embody the Wisconsin Idea by working together, often one-on-one or with community partners, on projects that serve the current needs of society. The close interactions between students and faculty promote student learning and benefit faculty members by enhancing their teaching, research and service. During their time at UW-La Crosse, students develop as ethical professionals and as members of a diverse workforce. Graduates are prepared to contribute to society by advancing in their professions or by seeking further education.

##### Graduate Studies Core Values

- Knowledge
- Collaboration
- Integrity
- Leadership
- Diversity & Inclusion

- Excellence

### University of WI-La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program Mission

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program is a regionally recognized program, grounded in **foundational sciences**, **hands-on learning** and **community engagement**. Graduates serve as entry level **leaders** interprofessional **team members** in the community. UWL occupational therapy graduates are committed to providing quality **evidence-based services** individualized to facilitate **quality of life, wellness, and participation** throughout all populations.

### Occupational Therapy Program Vision:

To empower graduates to advocate and lead with empathy and excellence in interprofessional, client-centered, evidence-based care through high-quality, engaging, and cost-effective experiential education.

### **Summary of Alignment: Mission and Vision Statements**

The mission and vision statements of the **University of Wisconsin–La Crosse**, its **Graduate Studies**, and the **Occupational Therapy Program** demonstrate strong alignment through shared commitments to:

#### **Student-Centered Learning and Success**

All three statements emphasize providing a dynamic and supportive environment for student growth—fostering **life-long learning**, **professional development**, and **ethical practice**. The OT Program's focus on empowering graduates through **experiential education** mirrors the University's and graduate school's emphasis on student engagement and applied learning.

#### **Collaboration and Interprofessionalism**

Each statement highlights the importance of **collaboration**—whether among faculty and students, across disciplines, or within community partnerships. The OT Program specifically prepares students to function as **interprofessional team members**, which directly reflects the Graduate Studies mission of working closely with faculty and community partners.

#### **Innovation, Research, and Evidence-Based Practice**

UWL promotes **curiosity**, the **dissemination of new knowledge**, and **innovation**. These ideals align with Graduate Studies' emphasis on research-based service projects, and the OT Program's commitment to **evidence-based, client-centered care**.

#### **Inclusion, and Leadership**

All levels express a commitment to **inclusion**, and the preparation of students to be **ethical leaders** in a global and evolving society. The OT Program builds on this by aiming to produce empathetic, community-engaged practitioners who serve a broad range of populations.

#### **Community Engagement and Societal Impact**

Each statement emphasizes preparing students to **engage with and serve their communities**—locally and beyond. The OT Program aligns closely by centering **community-based experiential learning** and a mission to improve **quality of life and wellness** for all populations.





Together, the mission and vision statements create a cohesive foundation that supports the development of **knowledgeable, compassionate, and collaborative healthcare professionals** who are well-equipped to lead and serve in an ever-changing world. The Occupational Therapy Program clearly embodies and advances the broader institutional goals of UW–La Crosse and its Graduate Studies division.





### **B-2: Occupational Therapy Program Goals**







Revised: 02/2025

## B-3: Our People

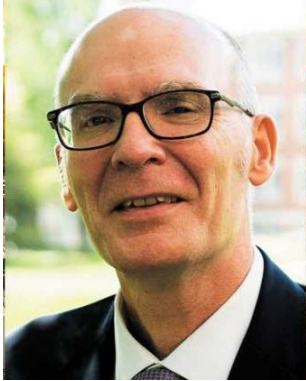

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## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENT HANDBOOK

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## SECTION C

### GENERAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM DETAILS

#### **C-1: Accreditation**

The Occupational Therapy Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) located at:

7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite

510E Bethesda, MD 20814

Telephone number: (301) 652-6611 (ext. 2914)

Fax number: (240) 762-5140

Email: [accred@aota.org](mailto:accred@aota.org)

Webpage: <https://acoteonline.org/>

Occupational Therapy educational programs are periodically reaccredited to maintain the quality of the program. The University of Wisconsin- La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program successfully completed the last accreditation self-study and on-site visit in 2015 and was awarded a 10-year accreditation. The next visit is scheduled for June 2026.

The University of WI-La Crosse Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) Program was authorized by the **University of Wisconsin Board of Regents** in 2004.

The University of WI-La Crosse maintains accreditation by the **Higher Learning Commission (HLC)** and was first accredited in 1928. The University of WI-La Crosse assumes responsibility for program appointment of faculty, admission of students, curricular planning, coordination of classroom teaching and appropriateness of fieldwork activities as indicated in program and University policies and procedures.

#### **C-2: Length**

The Occupational Therapy Graduate Program is a 24-month, full-time program starting each September. Clinical experiences are integrated throughout the coursework. The final 6 months (24 weeks) are dedicated to full-time fieldwork placements nationwide, with graduation projected for August, two years after entry.

#### **C-3: Program and Class Location**

All didactic coursework takes place on the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse campus in the Health Science Center (HSC), located on the west side of campus. Built in 2000, the HSC is a five-level facility shared by the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium, which includes UWL, Western Technical College, Gundersen Health, the La Crosse County Health Department, and the School District of La Crosse. The building houses classrooms, labs, and offices for health-related programs. Fieldwork experiences occur at contracted sites across the United States. See section C-5 for more information about Fieldwork settings.

### C-4: Didactic Face to Face Coursework

The UWL OT program values in person instruction for all didactic coursework. Courses are strategically sequenced to first build foundational concepts, then progressively expand knowledge each semester. Hands on experiences in the Occupational Therapy Program provide students with opportunities to apply knowledge and skills learned in the academic environment to real life situations in community programs, hospitals, and clinics. These experiences help the student develop professional behaviors and skills needed for competent, scholarly clinical practice. Hands-on experiences and community engagement are vital parts of occupational therapy education.

### C-5: Fieldwork Overview –

In addition to didactic coursework, students complete 6 months of fieldwork experience as a requirement for their degree. Experiential learning experiences are prioritized in courses throughout the curriculum in alignment with the mission and vision of the UW-La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program. The program offers a variety of diverse fieldwork opportunities, summarized below. We value both traditional and immersive Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences, which occur off campus in a wide range of community-based and occupational therapy practice settings. These experiences are designed to prepare students for professional practice and deepen their understanding of real-world service delivery.

Below is a summary of the program's formal fieldwork experiences and sequence.

TYPE	SETTING	TIMELINE	LENGTH
Level I	Pediatrics	Winter 1 *	1 week
Level I	Adult Physical Rehabilitation	Summer 1	1 week
Level I	Community Health & Wellness	Spring 2a	40 hours
Level IIA	Variety	Spring 2b	12 weeks
Level IIB	Variety	Summer 2	12 weeks

\*Note for the Class of 2027 only, Level I Pediatrics will occur in Summer 1

Additional Fieldwork information and expectations will be shared by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator in Fieldwork orientation meetings embedded throughout the curriculum.

### C-6: Professional Behaviors

The UWL Occupational Therapy Program places a strong emphasis on the development of professional behaviors as a cornerstone of success—both during the program and throughout one's career. These behaviors support not only academic and clinical performance but also the ability to build meaningful professional relationships and maintain personal well-being.

Students are encouraged to engage in ongoing self-reflection to evaluate their growth in key areas that contribute to professional identity and competence. This reflective process supports life balance and helps students set and achieve goals for both personal and professional development.

Each semester, students will review their performance in the following areas during scheduled advising

sessions:

1. **Knowledge** – Demonstrating a solid foundation of academic and clinical understanding.
2. **Commitment to Learning** – Showing initiative in acquiring and applying new knowledge.
3. **Technical Skills** – Developing the hands-on abilities necessary for effective practice.
4. **Integrative Knowledge** – Connecting concepts across disciplines and applying learning in context.
5. **Context** – Understanding and adapting to the broader environments in which occupational therapy occurs.
6. **Relationships** – Building respectful, ethical, and effective interactions with clients, peers, and professionals.
7. **Affective/Moral** – Acting with empathy, integrity, and ethical responsibility.
8. **Habits of Mind** – Cultivating attitudes such as curiosity, persistence, and reflection.
9. **Advocacy** – Promoting occupational therapy and advocating for the needs of clients and communities.
10. **Wellness** – Prioritizing personal health and well-being to support sustainable professional practice.

By actively engaging in this process, students lay the foundation for a successful and fulfilling career as occupational therapy professionals.

### C-7 Advising and Support

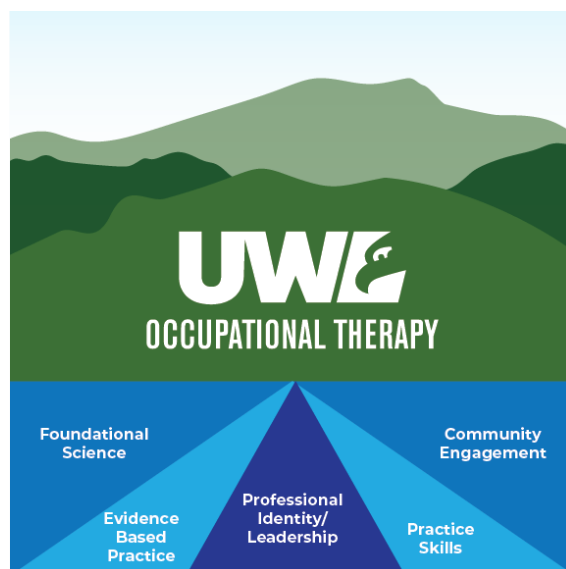
At the start of the program, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. Students meet with their advisor as needed and at midterm each semester to review academic progress, personal growth, and to receive support throughout the program. During these meetings, professional behaviors and individual goals are also discussed to promote ongoing development and success. (**Appendix C**)

Students are encouraged to maintain open communication with course instructors and the program director for any questions, feedback, or concerns. If concerns arise that require additional support, a success plan will be developed collaboratively by the student, their advisor, and the program director to address the identified needs and support student success.

### C-8: Curriculum Design

#### Curricular Threads

The professional program is conceptualized as a confluence of five curricular threads: **foundational science, research skills, professional identity/leadership, clinical skills, and community engagement.**



**Foundational Science** forms the basis of clinical reasoning. Courses dealing with the structure and function of the human body, how the body moves, and various medical conditions form the building blocks of understanding how occupational performance is affected by disease, injury and developmental delays. These courses are primarily offered in the first year and are integrated into later coursework and fieldwork experiences.

### **Evidence Based Practice (EBP)**

EBP prepares students to deliver high-quality, effective care grounded in the most current research. Coursework develops skills in finding, evaluating, and applying evidence to support ethical and informed decisions in both evaluation and intervention. Students engage in all stages of the research process, including designing studies, collecting and analyzing data, and disseminating findings.

### **Professional Identity/Leadership**

This thread focuses on developing the mindset and behaviors of a professional OT. Students learn personal and professional awareness, teamwork, leadership, advocacy, cultural sensitivity, and the therapeutic use of self. Emphasis is placed on lifelong learning, professionalism, and promoting the OT profession through coursework, advising, and fieldwork experiences.

### **Practice Skills**

Students develop the knowledge and practice skills required to make decisions at each step of the occupational therapy process. Coursework addresses assessment and intervention for diverse populations in various practice settings, including emerging areas of OT.

### **Community Engagement**

Aligned with UWL's mission, this thread emphasizes meaningful service and collaboration with the community. Students engage in activities that support mutual growth, advocacy, and professional development through hands-on experiences that foster personal and clinical growth.

Across all threads, occupational therapy theories guide decision-making, from assessing client needs to selecting and delivering interventions. These theoretical frameworks are especially emphasized in

clinical courses, where students apply concepts in real-world contexts.

### Relationship of Threads to Occupational Therapy Program Mission Statement and Philosophy

The mission and philosophy of the UWL OT Program guide the curriculum design. The table below outlines how each curricular thread supports the key concepts within the program's mission and philosophy.

Concept in Mission	Curriculum Thread
Entry level occupational therapists (generalists)	Practice Skills, Foundational Science, Leadership, Evidence Based Practice, Community Engagement
Leaders; Team members	Professional identity/leadership
Facilitate quality of life, wellness and participation	Practice Skills, Community Engagement
Individualized/hands-on learning	Practice Skills; Community Engagement
Evidence-Based	Evidence Based Practice
Concept in Philosophy	Curriculum Thread
Occupations provide meaning and allow participation in society.	Foundational Science, Practice Skills, Community Engagement
Participation in meaningful occupation is a determinant of health.	Practice Skills, Foundational Science
Occupations occur in a variety of contexts; occupational performance is unique to each individual.	Foundational Science, Practice Skills, Professional Identity/Leadership (advocacy)
Occupation may be used to prevent/mediate dysfunction/maintain health, adapt, and promote wellness. Occupation is used as a means and ends of therapy.	Practice Skills, Community Engagement, Evidence Based Practice
Focus of occupational therapy is engagement in meaningful occupations That support participation in life.	Foundational Science, Practice Skills, Leadership, Evidence Based Practice, Community Engagement

## C-9: Academic Objectives

The following objectives are analyzed annually for program outcomes and effectiveness.

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program graduates will:

1. Apply foundation science principles in their clinical reasoning throughout all steps of the occupational therapy process
  - Summarize structures, function, and pathological conditions that affect selected aspects of the body.
  - Explain selected aspects of client conditions and occupational therapy evaluation and intervention using foundational science concepts.

2. Function as entry level, generalist occupational therapists

- Communicate proficiently with clients, supervisors, co-workers, family members and significant others in verbal, non-verbal, and written formats.
- Use client-centered, occupation-based approaches throughout the occupational therapy process.
- Effectively evaluate client's occupation performance.
- Formulate intervention plans that facilitate the client's occupational performance, wellness and quality of life.
- Implement intervention plans that facilitate the client's occupational performance, wellness and quality of life.

3. Incorporate theory into their occupational therapy practice

- Use theory to justify evaluations and interventions used in practice.
- Use theory as a basis for program planning for both individuals and populations.

4. Serve as leaders with effective professional behaviors

- Adhere to ethical and legal regulations of practice.
- Demonstrate effective professional behaviors.
- Use culturally sensitive practices.
- Serve in leadership roles and advocate for clients and the profession.
- Embrace life-long learning for continued professional growth.

5. Use evidence appropriately to guide clinical practice

- Use evidence to inform decisions.
- Systematically record and analyze client outcomes in own practice.
- Read current scholarly literature related to practice.

Reviewed: 4/2020

**C-10: Curricular Grid (Effective Fall 2025)**

Course Number	Title	Format	Credits
Fall I (14 weeks)			
OT 524	Clinical Anatomy	Lecture	2
OT 525	Applied Clinical Anatomy	Lab	2
OT 530	Foundations of Practice	Lecture	2
OT 531	Applied Foundations of Practice	Lab	1
OT 544	Movement Principals	Lecture	1
OT 545	Clinical Applications of Movement	Lab	1
OT 550	Scholarly Practice I: Research and Measurement	Lecture	2
OT 650	Pediatrics I	Lecture	2
OT 651	Pediatrics II	Lab	1
	Fall I total credits		14
Winter 1 (one week)			
OT 791	Level I Fieldwork: Pediatrics*	Fieldwork	1
	Winter 1 total credits		1
Spring 1 (14 weeks)			
OT 611	Acute and Complex Conditions in OT	Lecture/Lab	3
OT 625	Community Mental Health and Wellness	Lecture	2
OT 626	Applied Community Mental Health and Wellness	Lab	1
OT 670	Adult Orthopedic Rehabilitation	Lecture	2
OT 671	Applied Adult Orthopedic Rehabilitation	Lab	1
OT 740	Pediatrics II	Lecture	2
OT 741	Applied Pediatrics II	Lab	1
OT 751	Scholarly Practice II: OT Research and Applied Statistics	Lecture	2
	Spring 1 total credits		14
Summer 1 (10 weeks)			
OT 515	Neuroanatomy	Lecture	3
OT 640	Assistive Technology	Lecture/Lab	2
OT 700	Physical Agent Modalities	Lab	1
OT 772	Clinical Reasoning Through the OT Process	Seminar	2
OT 790	Level I Fieldwork: Adult Physical Rehabilitation	Fieldwork	1
	Summer 1 total		9
Fall 2			
OT 526	Motor Control Principals	Lecture	1
OT 730	Neurorehabilitation	Lecture	2
OT 731	Applied Neurorehabilitation	Lab	1
OT 760	Scholarly Practice III: Evidence Based Practice and Research	Seminar	3
OT 776	Geriatric Practice	Lecture	2
OT 777	Applied Geriatric Practice	Lab	1
OT 780	Program Development	Seminar	3
OT 797	Clinical Readiness	Seminar	1
	Fall 2 total credits		14

Spring 2 – Session 1 (January-February)			
OT 725	Professional Practice I	Lecture	2
OT 770	Scholarly Practice IV: Analysis and Scholarly Dissemination	Lecture	2
OT 782	Level I Fieldwork: Community Mental Health and Wellness	Fieldwork	1
OT 800	Clinical Practice (Student led community clinic)	Lab	1
Spring 1 total credits			6
Spring 2 – Session 2 (March-May)			
OT 727	Professional Practice II	Lecture (asynchronous)	1
OT 801	Level II Fieldwork A (12 weeks)	Fieldwork	6
Spring 2 total credits			13
Summer 2**			
OT 801	Level II Fieldwork B (12 weeks)	Fieldwork	6
Total Program Credits			71

\*Note the Class of 2027 Level I Pediatric Fieldwork Experience will be offered in May at the end of the Spring 1 term

\*\*Students will graduate in August

Light blue indicates a Fieldwork Experience

## C-11: Course Descriptions

### OT 515 Cr. 3

#### Functional Neuroanatomy

This course will address the anatomical basis of neuroscience with emphasis on rehabilitation. Structure and physiological function of the central nervous system will be correlated for normal and abnormal processes. Patient examples and research literature will be utilized to foster appropriate clinical decision-making skills in students.

### OT 524 Cr. 3

#### Clinical Anatomy

This course provides a comprehensive exploration of human regional gross anatomy tailored specifically for occupational therapy students. Students gain an in-depth understanding of the body's structure and function with particular emphasis on the musculoskeletal, neurological, and cardiovascular systems. Key features include integration of theoretical knowledge with practical applications through lectures, group activities, and interactive digital resources. By course end, students build a strong anatomical foundation essential for clinical reasoning and effective patient care in occupational therapy.

### OT 525 Cr.2

#### Applied Clinical Anatomy

This course provides an in-depth exploration of human anatomy through hands-on cadaver prosection and digital media resources tailored specifically for occupational therapy (OT) students. Emphasis is



placed on the clinical application of anatomical knowledge to occupational therapy practice. Students engage in detailed study of prosected cadavers, study digital cadaver simulations, and participate in case studies that focus on functional movement, injury, and disease. Through the integration of clinical scenarios, students develop a comprehensive understanding of how anatomical structures relate to occupational performance and therapeutic interventions. This lab experience prepares students for advanced clinical reasoning and the application of anatomical knowledge in diverse OT settings.

### **OT 530 Cr.1**

#### **Foundations of Occupational Therapy**

This course introduces the fundamentals of occupational therapy and professionalism. Topics include the nature of humans as occupational beings, history and philosophy of the occupational therapy profession, and development of therapeutic use of self. Theories, frames of references, and other critical concepts used in the description and analysis of occupational performance are examined, as well as the form, function, and meaning of occupation in relation to the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process. Students are introduced to advocacy, professional writing, documentation, and interview skills in class and begin to practice these skills with simulations, peers, and community members. Self-reflection of personal characteristics is used to develop a student professional development plan to be used throughout the curriculum. It is a fundamental building block for all other courses.

### **OT 531 Cr.1**

#### **Applied Foundations of Occupational Therapy**

This course applies the fundamentals of occupational therapy and professionalism. Topics include the nature of humans as occupational beings, history and philosophy of the occupational therapy profession, and development of therapeutic use of self. Theories, frames of references, and other critical concepts used in the description and analysis of occupational performance are examined, as well as the form, function, and meaning of occupation in relation to the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process. Students are introduced to advocacy, professional writing, documentation, and interview skills in class and begin to practice these skills with simulations, peers, and community members. Self-reflection of personal characteristics are used to develop a student professional development plan to be used throughout the curriculum. It is a fundamental building block for all other courses.

### **OT 544 Cr. 1**

#### **Movement Principles in Occupational Therapy**

This course introduces principles of biomechanics and kinesiology to guide understanding and analysis of movement during occupational performance. This includes the study of structure and biomechanical function of the musculoskeletal systems and their influences on normal activities of daily living. This course also explores kinesiology and biomechanical considerations for specific musculoskeletal regions including the head, torso, and upper and lower extremities.

### **OT 545 Cr.1**

### **Clinical Applications of Movement**

This course explores principles of biomechanics and kinesiology and how they relate to the understanding and analysis of movement during occupational performance. This includes the assessment of structure and function of the skeletal, muscular, and neuromuscular systems and their influences on normal and pathological motion and how this may impact occupational performance. This course explores kinesiology considerations for specific musculoskeletal regions including the head, torso, and upper and lower extremities, and how this relates to commonly used hands-on assessments and interventions including range of motion, manual muscle testing, wheelchair positioning and client transfers. The use of movement assessment data are utilized for intervention planning through the OT process.

### **OT 550 Cr.2**

#### **Scholarly Practice I: Occupational Therapy Research**

This course introduces students to fundamental principles of research methodology and measurement in occupational therapy practice. Topics covered include research methods, level of evidence, research design, ethical considerations in assessment and research, psychometric principles of assessment (e.g. reliability, validity, standardization), developing a clinical research question, and scientific research writing. The course emphasizes the application of research principles to evidence-based practice and the development of sound measurement practices in clinical settings.

### **OT 611 Cr.2**

#### **Acute and complex Conditions in Occupational Therapy**

The course focuses on developing students' ability to evaluate and provide evidence-based interventions for medically complex patients in the acute care setting. The course covers the physiology and pathophysiology of various organ systems and the relevant physiological control mechanisms related to occupational therapy practice. Students learn to assess patients' needs at the time of treatment and adjust their approach accordingly. The course also highlights the dynamic physiological changes and individualized needs of patients in acute care, emphasizing a personalized approach to patient care over a standardized method.

### **OT 625 Cr.3**

#### **Community Mental Health Promotion**

This course provides foundational knowledge related to occupational therapy's role in traditional mental health settings and community-based practice settings for the promotion of mental health. Course concepts include models of practice and frames of reference that underlie the practice of occupational therapy in mental health, common diagnoses in mental health, group process, and traditional and emerging-market practice settings. Psychosocial considerations of occupational performance for clients with chronic physical health conditions are also explored for those receiving services as well as their caregivers.

### **OT 640 Cr.2**

#### **Assistive Technology**

This course will develop the students' ability to determine the need for and provide compensatory strategies for clients with physical and/or psychosocial dysfunction in different contexts. The student will design, fabricate, apply, and train a client in the use of assistive technology. Assistive technologies, prosthetics, communication aids, sensory aides, electronic aids to daily living, community mobility, driving, and wheelchair adaptations are addressed. State and federal regulations protecting various populations with dysfunction will be covered. Ergonomic and environmental modification principles will be used in home and community building assessment.

### **OT 650 Cr.2**

#### **Pediatrics I**

This is the first course in a two-semester sequence that introduces the fundamentals of pediatric occupational therapy practice. Content emphasized in this lecture course includes the child as an occupational being within contexts (e.g., the greater social/political context, typical social contexts for play/interaction, educational contexts, family contexts, and practice contexts). The occupational development and roles of children ages 0 through 21 are examined in relation to domains of typical and atypical development. The impact of selected medical conditions (including but not limited to learning and developmental disorders, emotional behavioral disorders, genetic disorders, and sensory disorders) are examined in relation to occupational performance. This course also introduces standardized and non-standardized assessments relevant to occupational therapy practice with infants, children, and adolescents. Students demonstrate knowledge of assessment selection, administration, interpretation and reporting consistent with a variety of pediatric practice setting requirements.

### **OT 651 Cr. 1**

#### **Applied Occupations and Interventions: Pediatrics I**

In this lab course students practice application of the fundamentals of pediatric occupational therapy practice. Content emphasized in the lab course includes analysis of the child as an occupational being within contexts (e.g., the greater social/political context, typical social contexts for play/interaction, educational contexts, family contexts, and practice contexts). The occupational development and roles of children ages 0 through 21 are examined in relation to domains of typical and atypical development. Models and frames of references related to pediatric practice are examined and applied to case scenarios. The impact of selected medical conditions (including but not limited to learning and developmental disorders, emotional behavioral disorders, genetic disorders, and sensory disorders) are examined in relation to occupational performance. This course also introduces a variety of commonly used standardized and non-standardized assessment relevant to occupational therapy practice with infants, children, and adolescents. Students demonstrate knowledge and practice of assessment selection, administration, interpretation, and reporting consistent with a variety of pediatric practice setting requirements. This course is designed to begin to prepare students for the evaluation of children in pediatric OT settings.

### **OT 670 Cr.2**

#### **Adult Orthopedic Rehabilitation**

This course explores how acute and chronic upper extremity orthopedic impairments affect

occupational performance in adults from diverse backgrounds. Students apply their understanding of body function and movement to address performance deficits related to orthopedic conditions. The course emphasizes occupational therapy evaluation and intervention focusing on optimizing rehabilitation outcomes for individuals with orthopedic dysfunction.

### **OT 671 Cr.1**

#### **Applied Adult Orthopedic Rehabilitation**

This course provides hands-on applied learning experiences allowing students the opportunity to practice assessment tools and treatment intervention methods typically used with clients with upper extremity orthopedic problems.

### **OT 700 Cr.1**

#### **Physical Agent Modalities**

This course develops the student's ability to use superficial and deep thermal/electrotherapeutic physical agent modalities as part of an occupational therapy treatment plan. Students also develop skills in safe and effective applications of these modalities as well as understanding the underlying principles, indications and precautions/contradictions for these modalities. Students learn how to document the use of modalities and how to complete client education regarding physical agent modalities. In addition, students develop an understanding of practice guidelines regarding use of modalities in occupational therapy.

### **OT 725 Cr.2**

#### **Professional Practice I**

This course provides an in-depth exploration of the professional practice of occupational therapy within the context of contemporary healthcare systems. Students examine the structure and function of healthcare systems, policies, and regulations that impact occupational therapy practice. Key topics include healthcare structure, billing, reimbursement processes, and the various types of health insurance. The course also covers essential aspects of intraprofessional supervision with occupational therapy assistant professionals and interprofessional roles in healthcare. Ethical considerations, professional standards, and the role of advocacy in shaping policy and practice are also discussed. This course addresses critical issues directly related to professional development, fieldwork preparation, and licensure and certification prior to beginning Level II fieldwork.

### **OT 730 Cr.2**

#### **Neurorehabilitation**

This course provides an in-depth exploration of neurorehabilitation principles and techniques used in occupational therapy practice. Students examine models and frames of reference appropriate for neurological diagnoses and the functional impact of various neurological conditions, including but not limited to stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, and Parkinson's disease. Emphasis is placed on evidence-based approaches to assess and treat motor, cognitive, sensory, and psychosocial deficits that impact daily function with a focus on remedial and compensatory approaches.

### **OT 731 Cr.1**

#### **Applied Neurorehabilitation**

This lab-based course provides students hands-on experience in the assessment and treatment of adults with neurological conditions commonly encountered in occupational therapy practice. Students apply theoretical knowledge from neurorehabilitation coursework to develop practical skills in administering standardized assessments, implementing therapeutic interventions, and utilizing adaptive equipment. Through simulated clinical scenarios, students engage in activities such as motor retraining, cognitive rehabilitation, sensory re-education, and functional mobility and performance techniques. Emphasis is placed on evidence-based practice and client-centered care to optimize functional outcomes for clients with conditions such as stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, and neurodegenerative diseases. Students have the opportunity to participate in interprofessional collaboration to meet client needs.

### **OT 740 Cr.2**

#### **Pediatrics II**

This course is the second in a two-semester sequence of the study of pediatric occupational therapy practice. This course focuses on the integration of pediatric occupational therapy (OT) content, assessments, and OT treatment as it relates to infants, children, adolescents, and their families. Continued integration of knowledge related to typical and atypical development and impact on occupational performance are analyzed in the context of case studies for selected conditions (including but not limited to learning disorder, emotional behavioral disorders, cerebral palsy, and autism). In this course, students continue to expand clinical reasoning skills related to implementation of the OT process when working with children, families, and their support systems. Focused content areas pertain to feeding development, behavioral management, social participation, play, visual skills, and fine motor/handwriting development are examined.

### **OT 741 Cr.1**

#### **Applied Pediatrics II**

This lab course provides students with an opportunity to practice didactic content in OT 740, develop competence in administering pediatric assessments, apply sound clinical reasoning to selection of assessments and planning intervention for children with various conditions in a variety of contexts (medical, school, home, etc.). Continued integration of knowledge related to typical and atypical development and impact on occupational performance are analyzed in the context of case studies for selected conditions (including but not limited to learning disorder, emotional behavioral disorders, cerebral palsy, and autism). Students continue to expand clinical reasoning skills related to implementation of the OT process when working with children, families, and their support systems, and demonstrate competency in common assessments and interventions for children receiving occupational therapy services. Application activities focus on feeding development, behavioral management, social participation, play, visual skills, and fine motor/handwriting development.

### **OT 751 Cr.2**

### **Scholarly Practice II: Research Methodology**

This course is the second in the scholarly practice sequence, advancing students' understanding of research methodologies and statistical applications in occupational therapy with practical applications in selected steps of the research process. Topics covered include reading a scholarly article, application/interpretation of statistical data, scholarly activities including data collection or literature review that requires analysis and synthesis of data. Students practice reading, critiquing, analyzing, discussing scholarly literature, and participate in scholarly activities that align with current research priorities.

### **OT 760 Cr.3**

#### **Scholarly Practice III: Evidence-Based Practice and Research**

This course is the third in the series of scholarly practice courses, guiding students through the critical interplay between scholarly inquiry and clinical application. This course focuses on developing proficiency in analyzing and critiquing diverse types of scholarly evidence. Emphasis is placed on psychometric properties and the selection of appropriate outcome measures, equipping students with the skills to identify and apply the best tools for varied clinical situations. Through hands-on engagement with data collection and analysis of their developed research studies, students further hone their ability to translate evidence into meaningful practice.

### **OT 770 Cr.2**

#### **Scholarly Practice IV: Analysis and Scholarly Dissemination**

This course is the fourth and final course in the series of scholarly practice courses. In this course, students analyze, interpret, and disseminate their research or systematic review. Students use SPSS to manage, analyze, interpret, and document the research data collected from prior scholarly coursework. They critically analyze the contextual and cultural influences of data collection and analysis. Students develop scholarly presentation (oral or written) which disseminates their findings in the most appropriate manner for the context. Students develop a clinical question and complete a critically appraised topic summary to share supporting evidence. Students continue participating in scholarly activities including data collection and data processing.

### **OT 772 Cr.2**

#### **Clinical Reasoning Through the OT Process**

This course applies the OT Practice Framework using case studies. Case studies include information gathered from previous fieldwork experiences. These cases are typical to occupational therapy practice and require a synthesis of material from several courses. Working alone or in groups, students use clinical reasoning and reflective practice to process case studies with various types of clients in a variety of practice contexts and environments. All cases include critical thinking skills that are required by practicing therapists in today's health care arena as well as enable students to explore issues important to the practice of occupational therapy with clinical reasoning (i.e. the occupational therapy process, evaluation, evidence-based intervention, theory/models/frames of reference, ethical issues, and justification of services.)

### **OT 776 Cr.2**

#### **Geriatric Practice**

Occupational performance in the aging population is explored with emphasis on the impact of disease or injury in the older adult population from diverse backgrounds. Specific focus is on analysis of the socio-cultural, environmental, and personal life roles of the elderly as well as those disease/dysfunction processes that frequently impact this population.

### **OT 777 Cr.1**

#### **Applied Geriatric Practice**

This course provides hands on applied learning experiences allowing students the opportunity to practice the occupational therapy process of observation, evaluation, analysis, and treatment of the older adult population.

### **OT 780 Cr.3**

#### **Program Development**

This course focuses on the steps of creating occupation-centered program development with the goal of program implementation of developed programming during spring 2 of the curriculum. Topics include beginning with an idea, exploration of problems/gaps in current programming, a needs assessment, analysis of demographic and epidemiological data, and a review of literature for evidence-based interventions. Students create programming to meet community needs through development of a mission statement, goals and objectives, methods, marketing, and an evaluation plan. Students utilize professional behaviors, intraprofessional and interprofessional communication skills when collaborating with community partners for the program needs assessment and design process. Principles of grant writing are also presented and practiced.

### **OT 782 Cr.1**

#### **Level I Fieldwork: Community Mental Health & Wellness**

This field experience is designed to provide an opportunity to observe and practice occupational therapy interventions for the promotion of mental health and wellness in individual and group settings. Experiences include professional behaviors, and collaboration, observation, leading group sessions, documentation, data gathering and reflective practice. Students participate in hands-on practice while leading group therapy programs developed in [OT 780](#), as well as field experiences in traditional mental health settings. Fieldwork partnerships are arranged by the occupational therapy academic fieldwork coordinator and supervised by instructional staff. This course is taught concurrently with [OT 726](#) to collaborate in the analysis of community program effectiveness.

### **OT 790 Cr.1**

#### **Level I Fieldwork: Physical Dysfunction**

Fieldwork takes place in an adult physical dysfunction or physical disability setting for one week. This is a 36-40-hour (1 full-time week equivalent) experience. This physical dysfunction or physical disabilities fieldwork provides an opportunity for students to observe and practice occupational therapy in a clinical setting with a variety of diverse populations. Professional abilities and experiences include cultural sensitivity, use of occupation within a clinical setting, preliminary documentation, assessment, and treatment skills. Fieldwork is arranged by the occupational therapy academic fieldwork coordinator and supervised by clinical fieldwork educators.

### **OT 791 Cr.1**

#### **Level I Fieldwork: Pediatrics**

This course immerses students in a pediatric occupational therapy setting for one full-time week during the winter term, allowing them to observe and participate in the OT process at a level appropriate to their placement. Under the guidance of a fieldwork educator, students engage in evaluation, treatment planning and implementation, and introductory documentation, while practicing professional behaviors and therapeutic use of self. Course activities include relevant assignments and discussion board posts on topics such as playfulness, clinical reasoning, and reasoning in action, supported by reflective discussions on the Canvas course page.

### **OT 797 Cr. 1**

#### **Clinical Readiness**

This working seminar course prepares students for hands-on clinical practice in the following semester. Students complete clinic orientation including a thorough review of clinic policy and procedures. Students are introduced to client files/case studies and utilize theories, evidence-based practice, and knowledge from previous courses to develop a detailed assessment plan and treatment plans for facilitating the OT process with their community volunteer clients. Students schedule and conduct client interviews to create an accurate occupational profile to support continuation of intervention of occupational performance deficits in a subsequent course.

### **OT 800 Cr.1**

#### **Clinical Practice**

This course provides students with hands-on experience working through the occupational therapy process through supervised mentoring with clinicians. Students work directly with community volunteers, conducting comprehensive evaluations, developing client-centered intervention plans, and applying evidence-based practices. Key areas of focus include client safety, documentation, client education, and therapeutic use of self, all critical components of professional practice. Through this immersive experience, students refine their clinical reasoning and interpersonal skills while gaining confidence in delivering effective, client-focused occupational therapy interventions to prepare for their Level II Fieldwork experiences.

### **OT 801 Cr.6**

#### **Level II Fieldwork**

The Level II Fieldwork experience provides students with a 12-week clinical placement in a practice setting under the supervision of an approved occupational therapy fieldwork educator(s). Students practice occupational therapy assessment, interventions, measuring outcomes, and documentation. This course provides opportunities to apply didactic learning in clinical practice. Students are required to complete six months of full-time fieldwork within 24 months. This 12-week course is repeated one time for a total of 24 weeks. Repeatable for credit - maximum 12.



## C-12: Technology Recommendations

Students are strongly encouraged to have a personal laptop or tablet to access UWL's online learning management system (Canvas), take notes, complete assignments, and access course materials.

Students should have access to the following technology and software:

- **Document creation:** Word, Pages, or similar
- **Presentation tools:** PowerPoint, Canva, Keynote, etc.
- **Video access and creation:** Smartphone, tablet, or similar device
- **Virtual meeting** software: Zoom and Teams are available through campus

Microsoft Office 365 Pro Plus is available free to all UWL students.

Public computers are also available in Murphy Library if needed.

Instructors will provide guidance on accessing any program-specific technology, such as video libraries, electronic documentation systems, and training modules.

For more information, visit the [UWL Student Technology Guide](#).

## C-13: Accessibility of Learning Environments

Occupational therapy coursework is held face to face within the Health Science Center, unless otherwise specified. All classroom, lab and public spaces (atrium, restrooms, elevators, etc) utilized during the didactic phase of the curriculum meet ADA accessibility requirements. Students requiring learning accommodations will work with the [Disability Resource Center](#) to determine accommodation needs. Additionally, in response to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, all faculty complete training in digital accessibility and tools are utilized to ensure digital content is accessible and meet guideline standards. Information about additional University accessibility needs (religious accommodations, Military obligations, Discrimination) are located in the required syllabus policies of each syllabus and at the following website: <https://www.uwlax.edu/info/syllabus/#tm-111060>

## C-14: Writing Expectations

Strong writing skills are essential to the development of competent and professional occupational therapists. The Occupational Therapy Program follows the technical writing standards and formatting guidelines set by the American Psychological Association (APA), 7th Edition.

Students are expected to use APA style for all formal writing assignments to ensure clear, professional communication and to uphold academic integrity by avoiding plagiarism. All students will complete plagiarism training during new student orientation.

Helpful resources:

- **UWL Murphy Library:** [libguides.uwlax.edu/citations/apa](http://libguides.uwlax.edu/citations/apa)
- **Purdue OWL:**  
[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/index.html)

- **UWL Writing Center:** Written work can be submitted for feedback at <https://www.uwlax.edu/tutoring-and-learning-center/writing-center/>

Hard copies of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th Edition)* are also available in the OT student lounge/resource area in the Health Science Center (HSC).

### C-15: Financial Considerations

#### Tuition

Current tuition charges for the occupational therapy program can be located on the OT Program Website homepage on the right-hand side under 'current tuition and fees'. The financial section of the occupational therapy website lists information on tuition, financial aid, scholarships, etc.

<https://www.uwlax.edu/academics/grad/occupational-therapy/cost-to-attend-and-financial-aid/>

#### Textbook Costs

Textbook lists will be prepared by the Occupational Therapy Program and distributed to students for purchase either from the UWL Bookstore or private sources. This list will be updated annually as new texts become available. Although the cost of books is high, keep in mind that you are building your professional library during your educational years. We will do our best to notify you of which texts should be purchased for your personal library versus those that can be rented or borrowed for the semester. It is appropriate to purchase used books if you have the opportunity. Current booklists for each semester can be viewed under the program webpage under 'student resources'.

#### Special Course Fees

Special course fees are attached to various courses throughout the curriculum. These fees are used for supplies that students need to complete the learning activities in the course. Current course fees can be located at the Cahier's website at <https://www.uwlax.edu/cashiers/master-course-fee-list/> (scroll down to OT courses).

#### Fieldwork Expenses

Students in the program should expect to incur additional expenses for travel and housing during Level I and Level II Fieldwork. Some clinical fieldwork sites are outside of the La Crosse area and students are expected to provide their own transportation to these sites and or assume moving expenses and lodging. In addition, students are required to purchase the appropriate attire for each FW experience. There are tuition fees associated with both Level I and Level II Fieldwork. Financial Aid can be applied towards fieldwork tuition.

#### Photocopying and Printing Expenses

Throughout the program, students may be expected to make copies or print assignments or handouts. ALL photocopy expenses are the student's responsibility. There are pay print stations in Murphy Library and Wing. The occupational therapy program has one computer printer for student use reserved only for printing assignments that the instructor requires in hard copy. Printing class resources is not appropriate on this printer and should be completed at the pay printing stations on campus or personal printers. Students are expected to follow all copyright laws when making photocopies.

See more information here: <https://www.uwlax.edu/murphylibrary/technology/copiers-scanners--fax/>

## **SECTION D**

### **PROGRAM POLICIES**

#### **D-1: Assessment of Student Learning throughout the Curriculum**

Learning Assessments are designed by faculty members to best measure the student's performance on the student learning objectives of the course and the program. Examinations may use various formats including but not limited to: multiple choice quizzes and exams, short answer, written or oral exams, case studies, laboratory examinations, and hands on practical/competencies. Students are expected to complete examinations independently unless otherwise notified by the course instructor. Submission of the assignments and examinations signifies the student's acknowledgment of work completed with academic integrity.

##### Practical/Competency Examinations

Hands on practical/competency examinations using volunteer patients, instructors, student lab assistants, or clients in clinical settings will occur during the curriculum with intensity and expectations increasing as the knowledge base increases. Competencies are created to simulate clinical scenarios. Students are expected to attend these examinations on time, and conduct themselves professionally. Universal precautions, safety and clinic maintenance are expected and graded as part of the examination. Please refer to 'Course Clinical Competencies' (Section E4, p. 39) for additional information.

##### Occupational Therapy Knowledge Examination (OTKE)

During the last academic semester (spring II), students take the OTKE examination. This exam is written in the style and format of the terminal national certification examination and gives the program information about the knowledge students have prior to level II fieldwork. The OTKE also gives the students baseline information about their areas of strengths and areas for further study and development on fieldwork. There is no charge to the student for this exam.

##### NBCOT Examination

Students graduating from the program are eligible to sit for the terminal national certification examination administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of the exam, the individual will be certified as an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR). Most states require a license to practice occupational therapy. State licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination and additional open-book testing on the state law. A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification exam or to obtain state licensure. An Early Determination Review may be required to determine your eligibility to take the certification examination.

#### **D-2: Criteria for Successful Completion and Progression in the Program**

Students apply to the program with an undergraduate degree and completed pre-requisite coursework, as listed on the website. Current admission requirements can be found on the program web site at <https://www.uwlax.edu/academics/grad/occupational-therapy/application-process/>.

To successfully complete the program, students must:

- Complete 71 credits of occupational therapy specific curriculum
- Complete all coursework with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0
- Achieve a C or higher in all courses to progress in the program
- Pass all Level I and Level II Fieldwork Experiences within 24 months of completing didactic coursework
- Submit an Intent to Graduate form in the Student Center in WINGS

### Progression through the Program

The occupational therapy curriculum is structured in a fixed, sequential format, with each course offered only once per academic year. To progress through the program, students must successfully complete all required coursework, demonstrate clinical skill competencies, and meet mandatory professional behavior standards. Students must complete each semester in order and remain in good academic standing to advance to the next semester.

A cumulative CGA of < 3.0 will place a student on academic probation. Students on academic probation are not in good academic standing however are allowed to progress to the next semester (probationary semester) after being put on probation. It is during this probationary semester that students have the opportunity to raise their grades. If the cumulative GPA is not raised to at least 3.0 during this probationary period, students will be dismissed from the program. Please see curriculum map on page 23 for timeline and progression through courses. No part-time options are allowed. Students are advised that failure to demonstrate sufficient academic or professional behaviors may result in either a delay in progression through the program or serve as grounds for dismissal from the program. Specifics of expectations for progression can be found under 'Academic Policies'.

Students must have completed all the academic course work and be in good academic standing (i.e. not on probation) to progress to level II fieldwork. Fieldwork must be completed within 24 months after the completion of the academic portion of the curriculum.

Students must successfully complete both the academic and fieldwork portions of the curriculum to qualify for graduation. Both Level II Fieldwork experiences must be completed within 24 months of completion of didactic coursework. Per graduate studies policies, both the academic and fieldwork portions must be completed within 7 years after beginning the program (Graduate Studies Academic Standard). <http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/>

### Certification and Credentialing

After graduation, students may request an official transcript from UWL records and registration and are eligible to sit for the NBCOT certification examination. Students are responsible for registering to take their board exam following policies and procedures outlined in the NBCOT Certification Exam Handbook' [https://www.nbcot.org/-/media/PDFs/Cert\\_Exam\\_Handbook.pdf](https://www.nbcot.org/-/media/PDFs/Cert_Exam_Handbook.pdf)

State licensure can be obtained after passing the NBCOT certification examination. Some states have additional requirements for obtaining a state license including testing on the law, oral examinations, etc. Students may not practice until they have been granted a license. In some cases, hiring facilities may allow practice under a temporary license which by following state legislation for temporary licensure.

### D-3: Student Grievances and Complaints

A student may file a grievance because of discrimination or a violation of published policies. Complaints may be initiated through the Program Director, the Department of Health Professions or the University. The complaint must be in writing and identify the complainant, if applicable. The written complaint must clearly describe the specific nature of the complaint, provide supporting data, and specify the requested response to the complaint. An online complaint can be submitted here: <https://www.uwlax.edu/student-affairs/student-concerns-and-complaints/>

Complaints against the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program may be submitted directly to the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) to allege that the program is not in compliance with required accreditation standards. To receive formal consideration, all complaints must be submitted in writing at the following address:

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education  
c/o AOTA Accreditation Department  
7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E  
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

Letters of complaint against education programs must:

- Describe the nature of the complaint and the related accreditation standards or accreditation policies or procedures that the complainant believes are not being met by the program;
- Document that the complainant has made reasonable efforts to resolve the complaint, or alternatively that such efforts would be unavailing; and
- Be signed by the complainant. (The confidentiality of the complaining party is protected by AOTA Accreditation staff unless release of identity has been authorized, or disclosure is required by legal action.)

The full policy is on the AOTA website at the following link:

<https://acoteonline.org/about/compliments-complaints/>

Information related to the UW System Complaint Process can be found here:

<https://www.uwlax.edu/finaid/resources/uw-system-complaint-process/>



## SECTION E

### UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - LA CROSSE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM ACADEMIC and BEHAVIOR POLICIES

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and are required of all students in the university. Students are responsible for the completion and honest representation of their work. The program follows the Eagle Eye policies defining academic misconduct, non-academic misconduct, and disciplinary actions.

<https://www.uwlax.edu/student-life/student-resources/student-handbook/#tm-7806>

#### **E-1: Grading Scale**

Unless specified otherwise by the course instructor, students will be graded using the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93-100
A/B	88-92
B	83-87
B/C	78-82
C	70-77
Grades below C are considered failing	

#### **E-2: Coursework Policies**

##### Remedial Work:

**Course expectations will be stated in each course syllabi.** Remedial work should not be expected. Any remedial work or retake of a failed examination, quiz or fieldwork assignment is left to the discretion of the course instructor. If the course instructor deems that the student has not sufficiently mastered the course content, the student may be asked to redo assignments, tests, papers, etc. until a satisfactory level of competency is achieved.

##### Class Absence:

The faculty recognize that unexpected events occur that may interfere with attendance or participation. Students who are aware of an absence in advance are expected to notify the instructor by email or phone. In case of illness, notify the instructor as soon as possible. Vacations and work should be planned around the university and program schedule. Some courses may require alternative activity dates outside of scheduled class times. Students will be notified in advance of these requirements.

Expectations are as follows:

- Miss exams due to illness or emergency  
Students are expected to notify the instructor prior to missing the exam.

- Miss exams for reasons other than illness or emergency  
Requests to reschedule an exam for reasons other than illness or emergency are at the instructor's discretion and must be approved by the program director
- Make-up exams  
Arrangements must be made with the course instructor to complete missed examinations (Includes lab checks, quizzes, competency checks, practice exams). All missed work must be completed within 3 weeks of returning to class after the illness/emergency. Students will be given an incomplete if the semester ends before the make-up time period ends and the work is not completed. The incomplete will be changed to the earned grade once requirements are completed.
- Extra Credits  
Faculty expect that students will master the course material because it represents a minimum level of knowledge and skills needed for clinical practice based on standards. Extra credit opportunities are not appropriate if they compensate for parts of the course content that are not learned well. Extra credit opportunities are rarely given and are at the discretion of the course instructor.

### E-3: Occupational Therapy Academic Standard

Students in the Occupational Therapy Program must maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA on all occupational therapy coursework and a minimum course grade of at least a "C" in each course. A grade of C is the minimal passing grade in the program. A grade of less than a C will lead to academic dismissal per graduate studies academic eligibility policies which can be reviewed here:

<https://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/academiceligibility/>

### E-4: Course Clinical Competencies

Clinical competencies have been identified throughout the curriculum in order to ensure the effective knowledge and delivery of essential hands on technical skills. Clinical competencies will be identified and outlined in each course syllabi if embedded in the course and are key assignments, skills and/or exams that evaluate the student's development of hands on competencies, documentation skills, and clinical reasoning. These skills will be used in future clinical courses, fieldwork and clinical practice. It is imperative that students demonstrate an expected level of mastery on these learning assessments as outlined below:

- Students must achieve a minimum grade of 83% on each of the key learning assessments in the course.
- If a student's performance on a key learning assessment is below an 83%, one retake is permitted per competency and must be completed at a minimum of 83% for the student to pass the course.
- On successful completion of the retake, the student passes the learning assessment and continues in the course but retains the grade from the first completion of the learning assessment.
- **A total of 2 retakes** are allowed during your time in the didactic program. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> retake, it is expected that all remaining competencies will be passed with a minimum of 83% to ensure safe patient practices, succession in the program and readiness for fieldwork. A need for a 3<sup>rd</sup> retake may lead to course failure and academic dismissal.
- If a student's performance is below an 83% on the retake, the student does not pass the learning assessment and will receive the lowest grade obtained and given a failing grade (D or F) for the



course, unless the timeframe falls within the UWL deadlines for dropping a course (see below).

- If the student fails the course prior to the UWL deadline to drop a course, the student will be advised to drop the course. The student may then take the course again when it is offered the following year. The student will not be able to continue with other courses in future semesters until the dropped course has been successfully retaken. No part-time options are available. The student will be able to continue in the other courses that are being taken concurrently during the semester in which the dropped course occurred. Note: If the student fails a learning assessment the second time the course is attempted, it is highly unlikely the student will be given the option to drop the course and attempt the course for the third time.
- If the student receives a failing course grade (D or F), the student will be withdrawn from the program. The student may appeal following the process outlined in the Student's Program Handbook.
- If the student successfully appeals and is readmitted into the program, the student will need to retake the failed course when it is next offered and will not be able to continue with other courses in future semesters until the failed course has been successfully retaken. No part-time options are available.

### **E-5: Failure of Course(s)**

If a grade D or F is received, students will be withdrawn from the program and graduate studies per the academic eligibility retention standards policy. Students will receive written notification from graduate studies following finalization of semester grades.

See policy here: <https://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/academiceligibility/>

Students may appeal this program decision and request that they be allowed to return to the program. Criteria for hearing an appeal to return to the program include (1) any extenuating circumstances that affected the student's performance (that are unknown to the faculty) and (2) the student's concrete plan for success if allowed to return. If granted, return to the program may require conditions for the student to meet including retaking of the failed course(s). Since the courses are consecutive, this may result in a delay in progression in the program until the courses are retaken and passed. Courses scheduled for later semesters generally may not be taken until all of the courses in a semester are passed. This will result in an increase in time to graduation, additional tuition, and may affect fieldwork placement availability. Full appeals process can be viewed in Section F.

### **E-6: Professional Behavior Notifications and Success Plans**

Student performance and professional behaviors are reviewed during mid-term advising meeting each fall and spring semester as well as at each faculty meeting in accordance with the behaviors noted in section C-6, p.18.

If there is an area(s) of concern that requires intervention, faculty are encouraged to address individual observations of professional behavior issues at the time of observation.

At any time, any faculty member can bring the behavior to the attention of faculty, either at a meeting or by email. If the faculty vote to support action, the faculty member involved will request a meeting with the student and issue a Professional Behaviors Notification (PBN). (**Appendix A**)

#### Professional Behavior Notifications and Individualized Success Plans

- Students will be notified in writing using the Professional Behaviors Notification (PBN) form



by their assigned advisor or instructor that has observed the concerning behavior. Students will receive a copy of the notification during a requested meeting. The meeting will be documented in advising documentation. A copy of the PBN will be sent via email to the student, the student's advisor and the program director.

- The Professional Behaviors Notification will include recommendations for an action plan if appropriate to address the behavior/situation
  - The student will work with their addressor to create an action plan and timeline for completion of remediation efforts.
- After the initial notification, if performance does not improve, or a new behavior concern is observed, a second written notification will be initiated using the Professional Behavior Notification (PBN) form with procedure outlined above.
- The initiation of second PBN, will result in the creation of a '**success plan**' to identify the following in a document: **(Appendix B)**
  - Behaviors of concern (identified by the student and faculty)
  - Goals/Expected Behaviors (identified by faculty)
  - Strategies to progress towards goals (identified by student with faculty recommendations)
  - Assessment methods to ensure progress (identified by student and faculty)
  - Timeframe for each goal (Student and faculty)
- The plan will be signed by the student, advisor and program director
- The success plan will be updated and revised as needed
- Plans will be reviewed with the student at least twice per semester
- All steps of the above process will be documented

### Professional Behavior Committee

If the student fails to comply with the terms of their success contract by the identified timeframe or receives additional professional behavior notifications, the student will meet with the Professional Behaviors Committee for further review and recommendations. The Professional Behaviors Committee will be comprised of a minimum of:

- Program Director or assigned delegate
- Faculty Advisor
- Academic Fieldwork Educator
- Non-OT faculty representative

If a student is requested to meet with the Professional Behaviors Committee, the following procedure will take place:

- Meeting will be scheduled by the Program Director within 7 days after the student is notified of non-compliance of success contract or a third PBN.
- Committee members and the student will be provided with all documentation relative to the PBN, success plan and remediation activities.
- Student will be given time to address the committee regarding the professional behavior

- concern and their plan for further remediation, if applicable.
- The student will be excused, and the committee will discuss the concerns and recommend a course of action. Possible recommendations include:
  - Dismissal from the program for behaviors the committee believes have not or cannot be remedied or are reprehensible
  - Program continuation with remediation terms
  - Program continuation without remediation terms
- Decisions may be appealed according to the policies stated in Section F of this manual.

### E-7: Academic Probation

If a student achieves less than a 3.0 cumulative average in any semester, the student will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. Students on academic probation are required to bring their cumulative GPA up to 3.0 after 9 additional graduate credits (usually that means by the end of the semester that they were placed on academic probation).

- Students may only be placed on academic probation once during the course of the occupational therapy program.
- Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA during the probationary timeframe results in an automatic dismissal from the occupational therapy program, which will result in an automatic withdrawal from UWL Graduate Studies.
- Graduate academic eligibility standard policies can be found here:  
<https://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/academiceligibility/>

### E-8: Dismissal from the Occupational Therapy Program

#### Academic

A student may be dismissed from the Occupational Therapy Program for the following academic violations per graduate studies Academic Eligibility Policies:

<https://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/academiceligibility/#readmission-after-dismissal>

- Students will be dismissed from the program if a failing grade (i.e. D or F) is achieved in any course throughout the curriculum, including Fieldwork.
- Students will be automatically dismissed from the program if the student's cumulative GPA is not raised to 3.0 after one semester (minimum of 9 graduate credits) on probation.
- Students may be dismissed from the program for any incident of academic misconduct. See the University policy and process here: <https://www.uwlax.edu/globalassets/offices-services/student-life/student-conduct/uwl-academic-misconduct-process-chp.-14.pdf>
- Students are automatically dismissed from graduate studies upon dismissal from the Occupational Therapy Program.

The program director will notify the student about the dismissal status by letter. This letter includes the reasons and cites the academic policies that have not been met. Academic dismissal may be appealed (See Section F). Once a student has been dismissed from the Occupational Therapy Program, the student is not allowed to attend any courses within the program.

Academic Policies for Graduate Studies can be located at:

<https://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/>

### Non-Academic or Professional Behaviors

A student may be dismissed from the Occupational Therapy Program for the following non-academic violations:

- Failure to attend three classes in a semester (in a single course) without prior discussion with the course instructor or advisor.
- Failure or refusal to participate in classroom activities (verbal and non-verbal participation), evaluations (including practical and competency) classroom client experiences, community experiences, or fieldwork placements.
- Failure to demonstrate awareness of and demonstrate safety protocols during competency and practical examinations, client experiences (classroom or community), or on fieldwork experiences. This includes any preventable injury to classmates or clients.
- Failure to demonstrate professional behaviors with peers, faculty/staff, guest speakers, clinicians, volunteer clients or management.
- Failure to remediate professional behavior concerns as outlined in E-6 above
- Failure to comply with or make progress towards goals in an individualized success plan.
- Failure to follow policies and procedures, protect confidentiality and client's rights in client experiences (classroom or community) or on fieldwork experiences, including failure to follow policies in this manual.

Violation of these behaviors will be brought to the student's attention with Professional Behavior Notifications and an individualized success plan as needed (see E-6) with the advisor/program director. Student failure to adhere to or make progress with the remediation plan in the established time frames may result in dismissal from the program. The actions of the program may be appealed. (Section F).

### **E-9: Changes in Status in the Program**

The following policies apply to all changes in status including dropping a course, leaves of absence, or withdrawals from the program. View graduate education procedures here:

<https://www.uwlax.edu/gel/graduate-education/changes-in-status/>

Students are advised that depending on the time of the semester, dropping a course, taking a leave of absence or withdrawing from the Occupational Therapy Program may result in tuition loss, a delay in completion of their Occupational Therapy Program studies, additional tuition, and possible career consequences.

**Before** taking any action to change status in the program, students are required to consult their advisor and program director to discuss the situation and to determine the individual ramifications for the student.

- All courses in the Occupational Therapy Program are sequential. Students must successfully complete courses in each semester before proceeding to the next semester's coursework. Students who withdraw from the Occupational Therapy Program will be required to wait a year for the courses to be offered again before continuing his/her studies.

- All courses in-progress at the time of withdrawal must be re-taken from the beginning of the semester if/when the student re-enters the Occupational Therapy Program.
- Students are advised that curriculum changes may occur that would result in taking additional coursework to complete the curriculum.
- Withdrawal from the Occupational Therapy Program will only be granted for **one year**. Students will be dismissed from the Occupational Therapy Program after being inactive for one year and may not return to classes.

### Withdrawing from a Course

If a student wishes to drop a course, they are advised to consult with their occupational therapy faculty advisor and program director to determine the ramifications of this action.

- The registrars' webpage lists specific deadline dates for dropping a course and tuition refund information. <https://www.uwlax.edu/records/dates-and-deadlines/>
- Withdrawing from a course may have significant financial and professional consequences for the student and students are requested to seek advice regarding financial aid before making this decision. This decision would result in either an additional year of study or a complete withdrawal from the program.
- Students are required to discuss this decision with the program director and obtain the signature of the department chair to drop a course.
- If a course is dropped prior to the published deadline, the student may continue to take the remaining semester courses. However, the dropped course must be re-taken and passed prior to continuation with the program. Courses are typically offered once each year, which will delay progression. Students choosing to drop a course, will join the next cohort to complete the dropped course and continue in the curriculum, delaying graduation for a least one year.

### Leave of Absence

Students may request a leave of absence from the program for one calendar year after consultation with their advisor and program director. A leave may be granted when the student is experiencing extenuating circumstances that substantially interfere with his/her ability to succeed in the occupational therapy program. A leave of absence is granted **ONLY IF STUDENTS ARE IN GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING at the time of the request (i.e. not on probation or failing courses)**. To be granted a leave of absence, the student must:

- Prepare a letter to the Occupational Therapy Program Director stating:
  - Student's Name and ID number
  - Request for Leave of Absence
  - Reason for Request for Leave of Absence
  - Date the withdrawal is effective
  - Expected date of return (must be within a calendar year)
- Contact Student Life and withdraw from all classes for the semester.
- Contact Financial Aid to determine the financial repercussions of a temporary withdrawal

Upon receipt of this letter and after discussion with the student, the program director will prepare a formal response stating approval of the leave of absence and any conditions that must be satisfied in to return to the program (i.e. such as medical clearance to return to school, etc.) Re-entry to the program is not guaranteed and the student may need to reapply for re-admission.

### Request for Re-Entry

At the end of the year of a leave of absence, the student must initiate a request to return to the program by January 1st of the year the student intends to return. If the student has not initiated a request to return to classes or misses the deadline, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the occupational therapy program by the program director. It is the student's responsibility to initiate this time sensitive request to return. Permission for the student to re-enter the program is not guaranteed.

- To request re-entry to the occupational therapy program, the student writes a letter to the Occupational Therapy Program Director stating:
  - Student's Name and ID number
  - Request to re-enter the occupational therapy program
  - What has changed in the student's circumstances during the leave that will make it possible for the student to succeed in the program should the re-entry be granted.
  - Specific evidence to demonstrate how any conditions of re-entry have been met.
  - Requested date, semester, and anticipated course schedule if re-entry is granted.
- Upon receipt of this letter, the program director will write a formal letter stating if the request to re-enter has been approved and the student's status in the program.

### Permanent Withdrawal from the Occupational Therapy Program

Students who wish to no longer pursue the study of occupational therapy for any reason, need to be aware that withdrawal from the occupational therapy program has significant ramifications. If, later, the student decides to study occupational therapy again, he/she will be required to reapply and begin the program over. Withdrawal from an occupational therapy program may affect the student's ability to be accepted for admission to a different program. To permanently withdraw from the occupational therapy program, a student must:

- Prepare a letter to the program director stating:
  - Student's name and ID number
  - Date of planned withdrawal from the program
  - Reason for withdrawal from the program
- Fill out graduate studies form to withdraw from graduate studies. Have it signed by the program director.
- Consult with student life to withdraw from all courses for the semester and any possible tuition refund available.
- Consult financial aid to determine financial repercussions of withdrawal from program.

## **SECTION F**

### **UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - LA CROSSE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM APPEALS POLICIES**

#### **F-1: Academic Grade Appeals**

Students who believe that the grade they received from a course does not reflect their performance in that course may dispute the grade and appeal. Since progression in the occupational therapy program is dependent on successful completion of course content from semester to semester, students must appeal the disputed **grade before the beginning of the next semester after the grade was earned**. Grade appeals go through several levels (in sequence).

##### **Level 1: Instructor**

If a student questions or disputes a final grade, he/she must begin with an information seeking discussion with the instructor no later than the two weeks of the posting of final grades. If the student does not accept the instructor's decision, he/she may begin a formal grade appeal.

- If the student wishes to file a formal grade appeal, he/she will initiate the process by writing an e-mail to the course instructor within 5 days of the informal discussion and no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> working day of the next regular semester. A copy of this email will be sent to the occupational therapy program director.
- This formal grade appeal must contain the reason for the grade appeal and supporting material.
- Acceptable reasons for the appeal are limited to:
  - The instructor used different grading standards for this student's work than for other student in the class or contrary to those stated in syllabus.
  - Grading of the student was arbitrary, biased, or capricious.
- The instructor will contact the student within 5 working days of receipt of the appeal and schedule a formal meeting with the student. This meeting will be attended by the course instructor, another faculty member or program director, the student, and anyone else the student wishes to bring (if desired). If the instructor is the program director, another faculty member or department chair will be asked to attend the meeting. The meeting will be recorded by notes and audio.

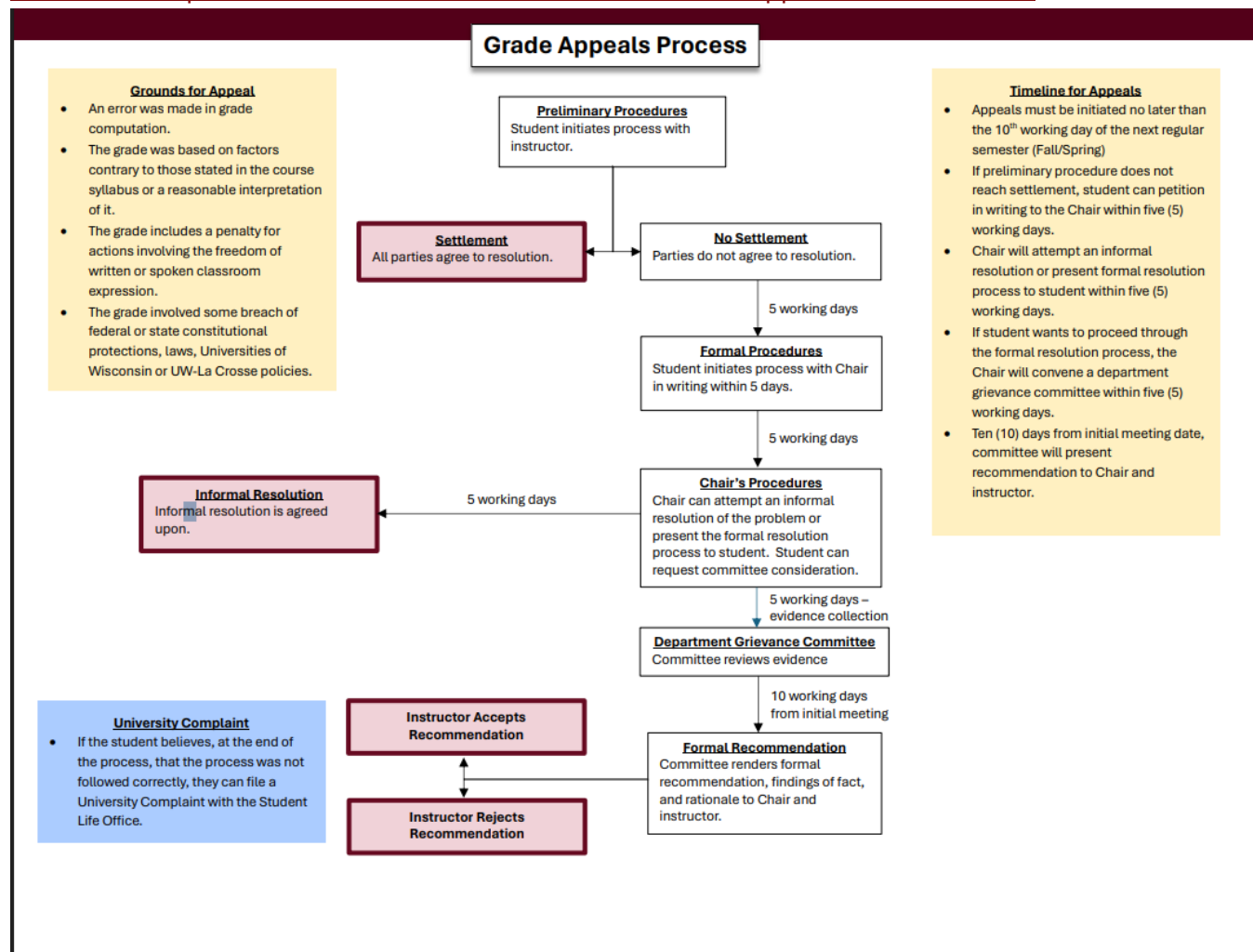
**NOTE: The person selected by the student to attend this or any level of the grade appeals process may not speak at the meeting. They may privately advise or consult with the student during the meeting, but will not be allowed to speak publicly.**

The possible outcomes of this appeal hearing are:

- Instructor accepts the student's appeal and changes the grade
- Student acknowledges the instructor's rationale for the grade and accepts the grade
- The instructor does not change the grade; student does not accept the decision and decides to appeal to the next level

The outcomes of the appeal will be documented by the course instructor within 5 working days after the hearing with a copy sent to the student, the program director, and a copy placed in the student file

Additional Steps can be taken as outlined in the UWL Grade Appeals Process Below:



## Department Level Appeals: Health Professions Department

If the student wishes to further pursue an appeal, the request for a formal appeal at the Health Professions Department level must be filed with the department chair in writing within 5 working days after receipt of the decision from the Department Chair.

- The appeal will contain the reason(s) for the Level 1 grade appeal and supporting documentation.
- In addition, documentation of the program director's and or the chair's recommendation of a grade change to the instructor which the instructor declined to follow.
- Within 5 working days after receipt of the appeal, the department chair will appoint a five-member ad hoc committee to hear the appeal as indicated in the Department of Health Profession Bylaws: Three faculty/IAS of the program (whenever possible) and two faculty/IAS

from other department programs besides occupational therapy.

- The department chair will appoint one of the committee members (other than the course instructor) to chair the committee.
- The department chair shall NOT be a member of this committee, but will attend the committee meeting as observer and witness.
- The departmental appeals committee will meet within 5 working days of receipt of the written grade appeal. The committee members will be given copies of the documentation of the previous three levels of appeal prior to the appeal hearing.

The appeals hearing will be conducted as follows:

- The student will be given 15 minutes to describe the basis for the appeal and provide supporting documentation to the committee.
- The teacher involved will be given 15 minutes to describe the rationale for the grade and the reason for not changing the grade.
- The department chair will be asked to describe his/her involvement in the situation, decisions, and actions taken.
- The student and instructor will be excused, and the committee will deliberate.
- The committee may ask for additional information from any of the parties involved and specify a timeframe for supplying the materials. The request for additional materials will be put in writing. If additional materials are requested, the committee meeting will be adjourned.
- The committee will reconvene within one week to review additional materials and make a final decision.

The possible decisions the committee can make are:

- Deny the appeal and support the grade as given
- Support the appeal and make a recommendation to the course instructor to change the grade. The appeals committee chair will communicate the outcome of the appeal hearing in writing to the student, course instructor, and department chair within 5 days of the final committee hearing. A copy of the student written appeal and the response of the committee will be given to the student and placed in the student's permanent record. A final grade will be determined by the course instructor and will be communicated to the student within 5 working days of receiving the committee's recommendation. The Health Professions Department does not have a process for grade appeals that goes beyond the department level

## **F-2: Non-Academic Appeals**

Students may appeal a program decision or action for non-academic/professional behaviors which he/she feels is unfair, biased, arbitrary, or capricious.

### Level 1: Occupational Therapy Program

- The student should contact the Occupational Therapy Program director as soon as possible following the decision or action of concern to discuss the situation.
- The Occupational Therapy Program Director will schedule a meeting with the student within 5 working days of the contact. If the student is on fieldwork, this meeting may occur by video or telephone conferencing.
- If the student wishes to submit a formal appeal of the program's actions, he/she must do so in



writing to the Occupational Therapy Program director within 30 days of the original program action.

- The grounds for an appeal are limited to documentation that the Occupational Therapy action was unfair, biased, arbitrary, or capricious.
- Supporting documentation must be supplied for the appeal to be heard.
- The occupational therapy faculty will meet within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal notice. If a particular faculty member was personally involved, that faculty member will be present for the information gathering portion of the hearing and excused during the deliberations.
- It is preferred that this meeting be held in person with the student being given the opportunity to represent him/herself. If the student is at some distance on fieldwork, this meeting may be held via video or phone conferencing.
- In that instance, the student will prepare a written statement of his/her appeal in advance, so the faculty have it available at the conference.
- The faculty will communicate the decision of the appeal hearing in writing to the student within 5 working days following this meeting.

### Level 2: Chair, Health Professions Department

If the student does not accept this decision and wishes to appeal it to the Chair of the Health Professions Department, he/she may do so by contacting the Department Chair in writing within 5 working days following receipt of the occupational therapy faculty decision.

- The chair will contact the student within 5 working days and schedule a meeting with him/her and whoever else is mutually agreed upon within 10 working days.
- The chair will make a recommendation to either support the decision of the occupational therapy faculty or suggest an alternative decision to that group and the student within 5 working days of the meeting.

### Level 3: Health Professions Department

If the student does not accept the decision and wishes to pursue further appeal, he/she must notify the Chair of Health Professions within 5 working days of receiving the results of Level 2 appeal hearing.

- The chair will convene an ad hoc group of 3-5 faculty, IAS, or adjunct faculty members who will meet within 10 working days of the student's declaration of appeal. At least 1 faculty member must be from the occupational therapy program.
- The student and other mutually agreed upon persons may attend through the portion of the meeting in which information is presented. They will be excused for the deliberations.
- The decision of this ad hoc Health Professions Appeals committee will be communicated to the student in writing within 5 working days following the meeting.

The appeal process ends at this level as the Health Professions Department bylaws do not specify a non-academic appeal process beyond the departmental level.

## **F-3: Academic and Non-Academic Dismissal Appeals**

Students may appeal a program dismissal from the program following the procedure posted on the graduate studies webpage:

<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/academiceligibility/>

### Procedure for Appeal for Readmission

- If a student wishes to appeal for readmission, the request for a formal appeal must be provided in writing to the Program Director within 1 week of receiving official notice of dismissal from the Graduate Studies. The request will contain the reason/s for appeal. Students will be advised of their rights and privileges by the Program Director. If the Program Director is unavailable, then a delegate faculty member will be established.
- The Program Director or delegate will acknowledge receipt of the written appeal request within 2 working days. The Program Director/s or delegate will determine a time when the majority of faculty will be present prior to the beginning of the next semester to schedule a meeting. The meeting will consist of majority of program faculty, student appealing and a representative of the student's choice (if any). The student representative may not speak at the meeting. They may privately advise or consult with the student during the meeting, but will not be allowed to speak publicly.
- Prior to the appeal meeting, the student must provide the Program Director or delegate with a letter describing factors that contributed to the student's performance, extenuating circumstances (if any), status of most recent action plan (if any) and specific new strategies that may contribute to the student's success if they are readmitted. The Program Director or delegate will disseminate the letter to the faculty in advance of the appeal meeting. The Program Director/s or delegate will set a deadline for receipt of the student's appeal letter so that faculty have adequate time to review before the meeting. The deadline will, in most circumstances, be 5 working days prior to the meeting. Failure to submit an appeal letter by specified deadline to the Program Director or delegate will result in automatic denial of the student's appeal.

The Program Director or delegate will appoint a faculty member to chair the committee. The student presentation and question and answer of the faculty will be recorded to maintain a record of the event. The appeal meeting will be conducted as follows:

- The student will be given time to describe the basis for the appeal and provide supporting documentation to the program faculty.
- Faculty may ask the student questions regarding the appeal and action plan.
- Student will be excused, and program faculty will deliberate the appeal decision.

The possible decisions the committee can make are:

1. Support the appeal with or without conditions regarding readmission to the Program.
2. Deny the appeal and reaffirm the student's dismissal from the Program.

The Program Director/s or delegate will notify the student of the outcome of the appeal decision as soon as possible after the meeting. Written documentation of the appeal decision will be given to the student, Department Chair, Dean, and Director of Graduate Studies within 5 working days of the appeal meeting. This documentation will also be filed in the student's permanent record.

Any student who is not readmitted to the OT Program will be advised of their right to appeal to Graduates Studies per

<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/academiceligibility/#readmission-after-dismissal>

## **SECTION G**

### **BUILDING RESOURCES AND POLICIES**

#### **G-1: General Policies**

The Health Science Consortium (HSC) represents an alliance among the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Western Technical College, Viterbo College, and two independent health care providers: Gundersen Health System and Mayo Clinic Health System. Specific aims of the consortium are to investigate collaborative initiatives to enhance primary care, strengthen allied health science education, and solidify interactive research initiatives in the clinical sciences. The focus of the multi-institutional partnership is directed toward planning and implementing interactive programs that optimize the use of shared resources and take advantage of the strengths of individual consortium members. The Occupational Therapy Program at UWL is a part of the Consortium.

The Consortium has built the jointly owned and operated Health Science Center. The multidisciplinary center provides space for integrated allied health science programming and provides the physical facility to support collaborative, clinically focused research in human physiology, microbiology, and rehabilitative services. Allied Health professions in occupational therapy, occupational therapy assistant, physical therapy, physical therapy assistant, physician assistant and radiation therapy are some of the programs located in the HSC.

Most of the space in the HSC is jointly shared with other programs from the partner institutions. Collaboration requires planning ahead, consideration, and respect for the rights of all to use the space and equipment.

#### **G-2: HSC Building Information**

##### **HSC Building Hours**

###### **September - Mid-May\***

Doors open: 7:00 am - 9:00 pm (Monday - Thursday)

Doors open: 7:00 am - 6:00 pm (Friday)

All students must leave by 10:00 pm

###### **Mid-May - August\***

Doors open: 7:00 am - 6:00 pm (Monday - Friday)

All students must leave by 10:00 pm

###### **Weekend Hours** (for students with swipe card access)

Saturday: 7:00 am - 7:00 pm (must leave by 7:30 pm)

Sunday: 7:00 am - 7:00 pm (must leave by 7:30 pm)

\*Hours may vary for holiday breaks

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENT HANDBOOK

Students have access to the HSC building when the building is closed to the public by use of your student ID card. After hours, use your student ID on the rear entrance to access the building. Room use during afterhours is considered a privilege that can be lost. Students must abide by the strictest of security measures to prevent entry by unauthorized individuals. Only Health Professions students are allowed in the building after hours.

There is nobody in the building after regular business hours and students are advised to have at least one other person with you and keep your cell phone available. Lights in the atrium are turned off after dark on the weekends to save electricity, but classrooms are available for study.

Current Health Science Center building hours, parking information and policies can be found on the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium Website at [https://www.lacrosseconsortium.org/uploads/content\\_files/files/Health%20Science%20Center%20Emergency%20Information%20for%20website%201-23.pdf](https://www.lacrosseconsortium.org/uploads/content_files/files/Health%20Science%20Center%20Emergency%20Information%20for%20website%201-23.pdf)

### Evacuation Procedures

The Health Science Center Building follows the University of WI-La Crosse's "Emergency Response and Preparedness Plan" which can be located here: <https://www.uwlax.edu/police/emergency-management/emergency-response-plan/>

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, individuals must evacuate through the nearest exit. If persons with disabilities cannot safely evacuate the building, assist them to the nearest stairwell of the building and notify emergency personnel of their location. Published evacuation plans with evacuation maps are located in each room with instructions for fire, tornado and active shooter events.

### Room Reservations

Students may reserve rooms for educational purposes in the HSC by contacting Lizzie Dickman. HSC rooms may not be used for social events or personal use. Students are free to use the conference rooms on each floor without reservation unless faculty has scheduled the room.

### Study Areas

Study areas are available in the basement area (by vending), atriums (1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> floor), professional conference rooms (3076 and 4106), rooms 4004 and 4006 and room 5096. Conference rooms 3076 and 4106, room 4004 and room 4006 are only available if professional meetings are not scheduled. Professional meetings take priority.

### Student Food Policy

Food consumption is only permitted by students in the atrium areas (2nd, 3rd, or 4th floors) or lower level (basement) by the vending machines. Food and beverage are not allowed in classrooms or labs, unless approved by instructor. Beverages with a cover are allowed. If violations occur, beverage privileges will be discontinued.

Faculty has the right to make an exception for students to eat/drink in rooms they are teaching in, especially if the class is held for a large block of time. In turn, faculty is responsible for the following, prior to leaving the classroom:

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENT HANDBOOK

- Ensure all tables are clean
- The garbage is placed in the garbage cans with liners
- Garbage should be removed from the room as a courtesy to the next users if:
  - There are large garbage items such as pizza boxes
  - There is food that will leave a lingering smell (such as onions) Garbage bag may be placed outside the room – please contact custodian to dispose
- All spills are wiped up

### Security

Security is provided by UWL Protective Services: 785-8000 (non-emergency) or 789-9999 for emergency. 911 should be dialed for life threatening emergencies. Campus Police make daily walk throughs in the building. If you see something suspicious, please notify someone. Campus police can also assist with getting in the building if you should get locked out. The campus has a comprehensive Disaster and Emergency Preparedness Plan. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the plan. <https://www.uwlax.edu/police/emergency-management/emergency-preparedness/>. All students are automatically enrolled in RAVE Alerts for timely notifications and advisories of campus safety which will be sent to you email and cell phone number as available in WINGS.

### Swipe Card Access

Students will be provided access to applicable classrooms and labs through their student IDs. ID cards can be swiped for room entry when the room is locked. Weekend building access will be available with swipe access from 10-7 on Saturdays and Sundays and students must leave the building before 7:30pm.

### Parking

The HSC parking lot is monitored from 7:00am-7:00pm, Monday thru Friday. All students and guests parking in the lot will need to register their vehicles using the pay station, unless a parking pass has been issued. The cost to park in the HSC lot or surrounding streets is \$1.00 per hour. The parking pay station in the HSC lot, accepts credit/debit cards, and \$1 and \$5 bills. Fees can also be paid using the **Passport Parking** app on smartphones. Paid street parking is available around the building and can be accessed via the **ParkMobile** app. Contact UWL Parking and Transportation if you are interested in purchasing a parking pass in an assigned commuter lot. A campus parking map can be found here: <https://www.uwlax.edu/globalassets/offices-services/parking/uwl-map-street-parking.pdf>

### Latex Policy

The Health Science Center ensures a safe learning and research environment for the faculty, researchers, staff and students through the collaboration of its partners. The Center aims to protect staff and students from unnecessary exposure to latex and to control exposure of latex and latex based products. To assure a "latex safe environment," latex balloons are prohibited and the use of latex based powered gloves and products will be strictly limited in the Health Science Center.

## G-3: Laboratory Policies

### Occupational Therapy Specific Classrooms and Laboratories

The Occupational Therapy Program shares laboratory spaces on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor with the Western Technical College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. We are fortunate to have modern

laboratories and equipment to use in our program. Students are responsible to use the equipment properly and safely and to clean up after themselves. The following resources are available for your use:

Labs and classrooms may be scheduled for small group work and practice of skills. Please view schedule posted outside of room prior to initiation of any activities in this space. If a formal reservation is required, please contact Lizzie Dickman at the UWL front desk on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

Specific Room Use Policies (i.e. Anatomy Lab and ADL Lab can be found in Section J of this handbook.

### **G-4: Equipment and Assessment Materials**

The Occupational Therapy program has purchased copies of many assessment instruments used in clinical practice from a variety of settings. Pediatric assessments are stored in the Pediatrics Laboratory and all other assessments are located in the ADL Laboratory. It is expected that students will become familiar with appropriate assessments throughout their time in the program to prepare for fieldwork experiences. Assessments can be used within the HSC environment at any time. Please refer to policy in Section J for checking out assessments if they need to be used outside of the building.

### **G-5: Student Safety and Health-Safety Policies**

The Occupational Therapy Program policies are designed to meet current accreditation, fieldwork site, and university requirements. Student safety is priority at our institution.

#### Evacuation Procedures

The Health Science Center Building follows the University of WI-La Crosse's "Emergency Response and Preparedness Plan" which can be located here: <https://www.uwlax.edu/police/emergency-management/emergency-response-plan/>

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, individuals must evacuate through the nearest exit. If persons with disabilities cannot safely evacuate the building, assist them to the nearest stairwell of the building and notify emergency personnel of their location. Published evacuation plans with evacuation maps are located in each room with instructions for fire, tornado and active shooter events.

#### Infection Control

All students are educated on Universal Precautions and Infection Control principles during new student orientation and within the program curriculum and are expected to maintain safety precautions with any human interactions (i.e. lap partners, guest speakers, clinic volunteers, etc.). Competency will be assessed prior to engaging in hands on experiences in clinical courses.

#### Criminal Background Check

The Occupational Therapy Program follows the Health Professions Department's criminal background policy. The student is responsible for obtaining the first criminal background check before beginning the program. Criminal background checks for Wisconsin will be rerun prior to the student leaving on Level II fieldwork. A special course fee is assessed for the second criminal background check.

#### Fieldwork Health and Safety

The following information is required from all students prior to attending Level I and Level II fieldwork:

- Personal Data Sheet/Immunization Forms

- Health Provider BLS Certification
- TB Test
- Criminal Background Check
- Completion of Universal Precautions and HIPPA Orientation

Specific sites may require additional information (i.e. physical exam, immunization, etc.). Expenses associated with supplying this information are the students' responsibility. Some of this will be completed during your orientation. However, it is the student's responsibility to make sure that their medical information is complete and timely.

## SECTION H

### UWL STUDENT RESOURCES

#### **H-1: Campus Resources**

Graduate students have access to **all university resources during didactic coursework and while out on Fieldwork**. (See Policy I-9). A full list of campus resources can be found on the student life website <https://www.uwlax.edu/student-life/>

Following is a partial list of student services on campus:

##### Student Health Center

Phone #: 785-8558 located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Health Science Center

Services available to all full-time students for small fees including: allergy injections, consultations, counseling, reproductive services, STI testing, immunization and laboratory services, medical evaluation and treatment, medication dispensary, nutrition, physical therapy and patient education.

Hours: 8:00am-4:00pm, Monday thru Friday

<https://www.uwlax.edu/student-health-center/>

##### Disability Resource Center

Phone #: 785-6900 located in 124 Wimberly Hall

The Disability Resource Center promotes equal access and educational opportunity for students with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the instructor and the Disability Resource Services Office (124 Wimberly Hall) at the beginning of the semester.

Students who are currently using Disability Resource Center services will have a copy of a contract that verifies they are qualified students and have documentation on file in the Disability Resource Center Office. The nature of the disability is kept confidential from the instructor, only the accommodation requested is revealed. Any student with a short-term disability due to illness or injury may be eligible for services. Check with your advisor if you need additional information.

<https://www.uwlax.edu/disability-resource-center/>

### Counseling and Testing Center

Phone #: 785-8073 located in 2106 Centennial Hall

Offers confidential counseling and academic skills services. Staff are committed to helping UWL students be more effective in their academic work, personal lives, and relationships with others.

Services offered include:

- Crisis intervention
- Individual counseling
- Group counseling
- Career testing
- Academic discovery lab
- Psychological testing
- National testing (GRE, MCAT, etc.)
- Test anxiety and study skills assistance
- Alcohol and drug abuse programs
- Biofeedback clinic

The center also serves as a referral service and is open year-round during regular business hours.

Services available in the summer are limited.

<https://www.uwlax.edu/counseling-testing/>

### Financial Aid

Phone #: 785-8604 located in 217 Graff Main Hall

The UWL Financial Aid Office offers various programs to students based on their qualifications. Students have the opportunity to talk directly with a financial aid counselor. Graduate students are eligible for student loans and work study funds. There are also limited scholarships available to Occupational Therapy students through the UW-L Foundation and the American Occupational Therapy Foundation, and other private donors (i.e. AMBUCUS, Paralyzed Veterans Foundation, etc.) See the financial section on the program webpage for more detailed information on program costs, financial aid and scholarships.

<https://www.uwlax.edu/finaid/>

### Eagle Recreation Center

Phone #: 785-5225 located in 125 Recreational Eagle Center

A healthy mind is a healthy body! Full-time students can participate in recreational activities on campus or have a quick work out in the newly remodeled fitness center. Programs offered include 1) indoor climbing; 2) sport clubs; 3) fitness programs; 4) informal recreation; 5) instructional programs; 6) intramural sports; 7) Outdoor Connection gear rental and trips; 8) special events and 9) Fitness Center and personal training

<https://www.uwlax.edu/recsports/>

### Murphy Library

Phone #: 785-8505 located in 130 Murphy Library

Murphy Library provides students with research, course-related, self-enrichment, and recreational library materials. All libraries in the UW system may be accessed through the using "SEARCH@UW" search feature. The library contains many texts and periodicals in hard copy that are specific to occupational therapy and rehabilitation. On-line data bases are provided through Murphy as well which are utilized heavily during research and evidence-based courses. Interlibrary loan is available for



resources not available at Murphy Library. The reference librarians are very helpful and available through email, chat, phone, or in person at the reference desk.

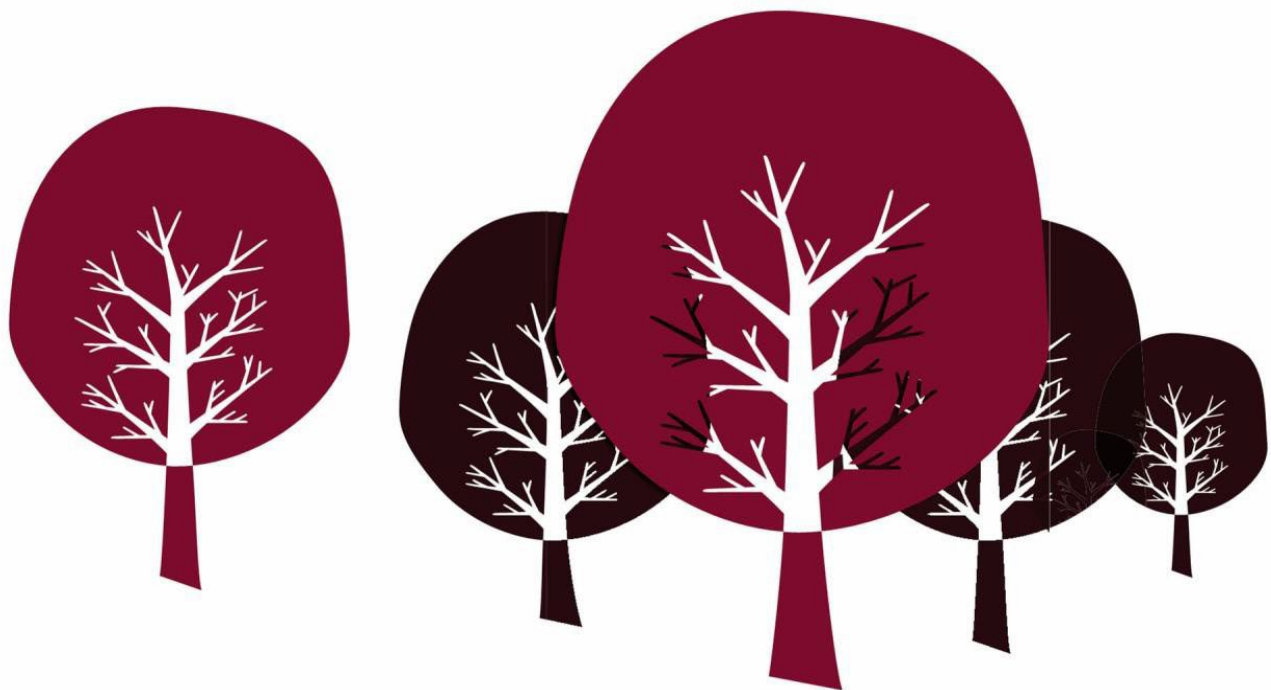
<https://www.uwlax.edu/murphylibrary/>

Academic Advising Center & Career Services

Phone #: 785-6950 located in 1209 Centennial Hall

Provides consultation on resume and job interview strategies

<https://www.uwlax.edu/aaccs/>



## **SECTION I**

### **PROGRAM POLICIES**

#### **I-1: Policy for Professional Writing and Citing Sources**

University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program

##### **Policy and Procedure: Professional Writing and Citing Sources**

##### **Policy Statement**

The Occupational Therapy Program is committed to academic integrity and professional writing. This policy provides general guidance on the expectations for citing sources in student writing. Individual instructors may provide specific citation and formatting expectations for assignments within their courses.

##### **Procedure**

##### **1. Citation Style Standard**

The Occupational Therapy Program follows the **American Psychological Association (APA) 7th Edition** style for all written assignments. This includes both **in-text citations** and **reference lists**.

##### **2. Direct Quotations**

Any material directly quoted from a published source must be cited using **APA format**.

- Acceptable sources include books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and reputable online sources.
- **Class lecture notes are not acceptable sources** and should not be cited. Use primary sources whenever possible.

##### **3. Paraphrasing Guidelines**

Paraphrased material must also be cited appropriately.

- The University of Indiana tutorial provides guidance on the difference between **close paraphrasing** and **distant paraphrasing**, including how to cite each properly.

##### **4. Instructor-Specific Expectations**

Citation requirements may vary by assignment and instructor.

- For example, some reflection papers may require source citation, while others may not.

- It is the **student's responsibility** to clarify assignment requirements with each instructor.
- 5. **APA Support Resources**  
Additional information on APA formatting is available through the **Purdue OWL APA Guide**:  
[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/general\\_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html)
- 6. **APA Manuals**  
**Hard copies of the APA Publication Manual (7th ed.)** are available in the **student lounge** for reference.
- 7. **Writing Support**  
Students are encouraged to use the **UW–La Crosse Writing Center** for feedback on writing and APA formatting: <https://www.uwlax.edu/tutoring-and-learning-center/writing-center/>

## I-2: Personal Electronics and Social Media Policy

### Personal Electronics and Social Media Policy

*University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program*

#### Personal Electronics Use in the Classroom

Electronic devices can support learning when used appropriately. However, students are expected to use these tools **professionally and responsibly**.

**The following actions are strictly prohibited:**

- Audio recording any lecture, discussion, or presentation **without explicit instructor permission** for each instance.
- Taking **pictures of cadavers** under any circumstances.
- Taking **photos or videos of classroom activities, materials, peers, or guest presenters** without explicit permission.
- **Using cell phones in bathrooms.**

**Violation of these rules** may be considered **non-academic misconduct** and could result in disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the program.

### Social Media Use

The OT Program recognizes the widespread use of social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, blogs). Students must understand that **they have no expectation of privacy** when posting on public or semi-public platforms.

**The following actions are strictly prohibited:**

- Posting **any personal health information** about clients/patients, including de-identified details that may still make someone recognizable.
- Sharing **private academic information** about other students or trainees (e.g., grades, evaluations, exam scores).
- Presenting yourself as an **official representative** of the UWLa Crosse OT Program or its affiliates.
- Using **false identities** or misrepresentation to avoid compliance with these rules.
- Connecting with **clients or patients via personal social media** in a way that violates ethical boundaries (follow fieldwork site guidelines and professional standards).

**Best practices for personal use of social media:**

- Use a **personal email address**, not your UWL email, when registering for social media.
- Maintain a **professional online presence** at all times.
- Engage in **civil, respectful discourse**.

### Student Organizations & Social Media

Registered OT student organizations that use social media must:

- Include their **faculty advisor and/or Director of Student Affairs** on all platforms.
- **Not present themselves** as official representatives of UWLa Crosse or its affiliates.
- Follow all **university identity and professional conduct standards**.

**Violations** may lead to misconduct review and loss of the organization's registered status.

### I-3: Anatomy Laboratory Policies

The following is a list of rules that is designed to ensure your safety, the safety of the instructors and respect the dignity of the donors/donor specimens

1. ***First and foremost, treat all specimens and cadavers with respect.***
2. The laboratory door is to always be kept closed. Please do not leave it open when you are working in the lab. Donor bodies and human specimens are not available to those without legitimate purpose.
3. Eating, drinking, or gum chewing is not permitted anywhere in the interior of the Lab. Keep fingers, pencils, and other objects out of your mouth.
4. Appropriate protection is required. Protective clothing, including closed-toe shoes, gloves, and lab coats and/or scrubs must be worn in the lab at all times. Gloves must be disposed of properly before leaving the lab.
5. Keep all areas clear of books, clothing, and other personal items. They should be stored in the atrium or other space provided by your program.
6. Use extreme care when using sharp instruments. It is recommended if you change scalpel blades, that they are disposed ONLY in the RED sharps containers, located on the counter by the gloves.
7. If you should cut, puncture, or wound yourself with any instruments, notify an instructor for assistance. Thoroughly wash the wound and bandage, until you get professional help.
8. After completion of dissection, any leftover tissues on your tray should be disposed appropriately in the cadaver containers and packaged. Paper towels and gloves should be disposed in the regular trash bins.
9. Wash the trays with soap, wipe down the cadaver trays and scrub tabletops with the table cleaning solution at the end of each lab in which you have used preserved specimens.
10. At the end of the lab, wash your hands with hand soap and water at the designated sinks on either side of the room.
11. Keep all laboratory work areas neat and safe. Discard all used paper towels and trash in the trash receptacles ONLY. DO NOT leave items in the sink, on tabletops, or at the sides of the room.
12. If you should splash preservative or an irritating fluid, disinfectant, or specimen fragments into your eyes, immediately and thoroughly rinse them in the eyewash station. Be aware of the location prior to lab training. Notify an instructor as soon as possible.

13. Outside class time, you will need to individually swipe into the lab. This helps us keep track of who is entering and exiting the lab should issues arise.
14. You should not be in the laboratory space alone. When studying in the “off hours” please make sure to bring a classmate.

## I-4: Dress Code Policy

### *University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program*

Occupational therapy students are expected to maintain a professional appearance in all program-related settings. Your attire should reflect respect for clients, faculty, peers, and the profession.

#### Classroom Attire

- Casual attire is generally acceptable for regular class sessions.
- When **guest speakers or patients** are present, **professional attire and name tags** are required unless otherwise instructed by the course instructor.

#### Lab Attire

- Lab dress requirements will be outlined in individual course syllabi.
- Students must wear **clothing that allows for movement and clinical skills practice** (e.g., loose-fitting pants, short-sleeve tops, etc.).
- **Anatomy lab:** requires **lab coat and closed-toe shoes**.
- **Nails** should be clean and trimmed short to prevent injury to lab partners.
- Students without proper lab attire may be asked to change before participating.

#### Community and Fieldwork Placements

- Follow the **dress code policies of the specific site** as provided by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator or course instructor.
- In general, students should wear:
  - **Name tag**
  - **Closed-toe shoes** (for safety and infection control)

#### Not allowed in clinical or professional settings:

- Halter tops, crop tops, or sports bras
- Low-cut or revealing clothing (cleavage, bare midriff)
- Sleeveless shirts or visible undergarments
- Shorts
- Clothing with slogans, graphics, or advertisements



**Note:** Professionalism and safety take precedence over personal style in clinical environments. Dress choices should align with expectations of health care professionals.

## I-5: ADL Equipment and Wheelchair Policy

### University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program

Wheelchairs and ADL (Activities of Daily Living) equipment are provided to support learning and skill development. Students are expected to use this equipment **appropriately, respectfully, and responsibly**.

#### General Use Guidelines

1. **Equipment is for lab practice and assigned coursework only.**
  - Wheelchairs and ADL tools are not for personal use.
  - Do not use wheelchairs as furniture or for recreational activity.
2. **Instructor permission is required** to remove any equipment from the building.
3. **Check-out process** (Room 4014 and ADL lab):
  - Sign the check-out sheet after receiving instructor approval.
    1. 4014: Located on bulletin board at room entrance
    2. 4022 (ADL): Located to right of door on wall
  - Confirm the equipment is **clean, complete, and functional** (e.g., leg rests included, all pieces accounted for).
4. **Check-in process:**
  - Return equipment within **24 hours** or as directed.
  - Meet with the instructor for inspection.
  - Equipment must be clean, undamaged, and returned to the correct **labeled storage area**.
5. **Responsibility for damage:**
  - Students are financially responsible for any **missing parts or damage** beyond normal wear and tear.
  - The instructor will determine if the condition reflects acceptable use or requires replacement/repair.
6. **Equipment availability** is determined by instructor discretion based on current needs.

## I-6: Drug Testing Policy

### University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program

#### Policy and Procedure: Drug Testing

##### Policy Statement

Students enrolled in the Occupational Therapy Program must comply with the drug and substance use policies of the university, the program, and clinical fieldwork sites. As part of professional and legal expectations, students may be required to complete drug testing prior to or during fieldwork placements.

##### Procedure

###### 1. Fieldwork Site Requirements

- Clinical affiliate sites reserve the right to require **drug testing** as a condition of participation in fieldwork.
- Drug testing may be required **prior to the start of fieldwork** and/or **randomly during fieldwork**.

###### 2. Federal Law Compliance

- Although the use of marijuana and marijuana-related products (e.g., edibles, gummies, vapes, and other THC-containing substances) may be **legal in some states**, marijuana remains a **Schedule I drug under federal law**.
- Many clinical fieldwork sites receive federal funding (e.g., through **Medicare and Medicaid**) and must adhere to **federal regulations** that **prohibit marijuana use**, regardless of state-level legality or medical prescriptions.

###### 3. Professional Expectations

- The use of marijuana and marijuana-related products is considered **inappropriate and unprofessional** within the occupational therapy profession.
- Students are expected to uphold the standards of professional behavior required by the program and the occupational therapy profession.

###### 4. Consequences of a Positive Drug Test

- A **positive drug test**, including for marijuana or related substances, or **self-disclosure of use**, may result in the **rescinding of a fieldwork placement**.
- Loss of a fieldwork site may cause **delays in progression** through the curriculum or in meeting graduation requirements.

- Inability to secure a fieldwork placement due to drug use may lead to **dismissal from the Occupational Therapy Program**.

5. **Student Responsibility**

- It is the **student's responsibility** to remain informed about and comply with the drug testing requirements of each clinical site.
- Students should avoid the use of any substance that may compromise their eligibility for fieldwork placements or their ability to meet professional standards.

## I-7: Criminal Background Check

### Criminal Background Check Policy and Procedure

#### University of Wisconsin–La Crosse, Health Professions Department

##### Purpose

To comply with standards from The Joint Commission (JCAHO) and the Wisconsin Caregiver Law, criminal background checks are required for all Health Professions students participating in clinical or fieldwork experiences. This ensures student eligibility for placement and upholds professional and legal standards.

##### Policy Overview

All students admitted to the program must complete an initial background check prior to the start of the program and a re-check prior to full-time clinical or fieldwork placements. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from the program.

#### 1. Initial Background Check (Student Responsibility)

- **Timing:** Students will receive information to submit background checks with their admission offer. Must be submitted upon acceptance of admissions offer, prior to the first day of class.
- **Provider:** Students are encouraged to use **CastleBranch** at [www.castlebranch.com](http://www.castlebranch.com) using the program-provided code.
- **Cost:** ~\$45 (varies by prior residency); paid by the student.
- **Includes:**
  - Social Security number verification
  - Wisconsin Caregiver Background Check
  - Criminal History Check

Students should retain a copy of the background check for future use.

#### 2. Background Check Re-Check (Program Responsibility)

- **Timing:** Completed **prior to the first full-time clinical/fieldwork rotation.**
- **Includes:**
  - Updated Wisconsin and Minnesota criminal background check
  - Caregiver Background Check

- **Cost:** Assessed as a **special course fee** and billed to the student.
- **Note:** Checks completed through outside facilities are **not accepted** as substitutes. Some states may require additional paperwork. Students will be notified in this case.

### 3. Recordkeeping & Confidentiality

- Background check results are stored securely and separately from academic records.
- Only authorized personnel have access.
- Records are destroyed after the student leaves the program following the University Record Retention Policy.
- Students must sign a **release form** permitting the program to share relevant information with placement sites.

### 4. Disclosure of Criminal History

- Students will be notified if their record may impact fieldwork placement or future licensure.
- The Program Director will meet with the student to discuss implications and next steps.

### 5. Ongoing Reporting Requirement

Students are required to **immediately report** any new criminal convictions to the Program Director. Failure to do so will result in **immediate dismissal** from the program.

#### Summary of Student Responsibilities

Action	Timing	Responsible Party	Notes
Complete initial background check	Upon acceptance of admissions offer	Student	Use CastleBranch
Submit signed release form	Part of student orientation module	Student	Upload to EXXAT
Complete re-check	Before clinical/fieldwork begins	Program	Charged as a course fee
Report new convictions	Immediately upon occurrence	Student	Notify Program Director

For additional questions or clarification, contact the Fieldwork Support Person or your Program Director.

## I-8 Assessment Use and Check Out Procedures

### Assessment Use Policy

#### University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program

The UW-La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program maintains a collection of clinical assessment tools for student learning and skill development. These tools are **expensive and often contain small parts**, so careful use is required. Assessment kits are stored in **locked classrooms** accessible via swipe card for OT and OTA students.

### Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for **proper use, return, and replacement** of any lost or damaged materials.

#### 1. Use Within the HSC Building

- Assessments may be used for practice **only in OT classrooms**.
- Kits **may not be removed** from the Health Science Center (HSC) without instructor permission.
- Return assessments **promptly** after use to their **labeled storage location** (Pediatrics Lab or ADL Lab), ensuring **all components** are present and intact.

#### 2. Checking Assessments Out of the HSC

- Obtain **instructor approval** before taking an assessment off-site.
- **Before removal**: Check that all materials are included and undamaged.
- **Return process**:
  - Verify all pieces are accounted for upon return.
  - Coordinate with your instructor to officially check the item back in.

### Faculty Responsibilities

- Course instructors will maintain the **shared tracking document** to update the location and status of all assessment tools. (found in OneDrive under Faculty Resources).
- Instructors will collaborate with students during the checkout/check-in process.

**Note:** Students may be held financially responsible for **lost, incomplete, or damaged kits**.

## I-9 Student Health, Well-Being, and Support Services Policy

### University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program

#### Policy Statement:

The University of Wisconsin–La Crosse (UWL) Occupational Therapy (OT) Program is committed to supporting student health, wellness, and success throughout the academic and fieldwork experiences. The program ensures that all students—regardless of educational delivery model (in-person, hybrid, or distance education)—have equitable access to physical and mental health resources, academic support services, and reasonable accommodations through university-wide and program-specific procedures.

#### Procedure:

##### 1. Access to Health and Well-Being Resources

- Students are informed during orientation and in the student handbook about university health services, including:
  - **Student Health Center** (medical services)
  - **Disability Resource Center** (academic accommodations)
  - **Counseling & Testing Center** (mental health support)
  - **Wellness and Health Advocacy**
- Current links to campus resources are available on the program Canvas New Student Orientation site and student handbook.

##### 2. Communication of Available Support Services

- Information about student support services is shared:
  - During program orientation
  - In the OT Student Handbook
  - Through course syllabi
  - Via university communication channels (emails, newsletters, advising)

##### 3. Equitable Access Across Educational Delivery Models

- All students, including those in hybrid or distance learning models, have:
  - Access to advising, testing and counseling services, academic support, and wellness resources
  - Opportunities to meet with faculty and support staff via video conferencing



- Online access to program materials and handbooks

### 4. Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

#### Definition of Reasonable Accommodations

*Reasonable accommodations* are defined as modifications or adjustments to the learning environment, instructional delivery, assessments, or clinical experiences that enable qualified students with documented disabilities to have equal access to education without fundamentally altering essential program requirements, compromising academic standards, or causing undue hardship to the institution.

- The Occupational Therapy Program at the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse is committed to fostering an inclusive learning environment by ensuring access and equity for all students, including those with disabilities. In alignment with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the program supports and implements **reasonable accommodations** to promote student success in both academic and clinical settings.
- UWL's **Disability Resource Center** coordinates reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
  - Students must register with the Disability Resource Center and submit appropriate documentation.
  - Once accommodations are approved, faculty receive notice and implement recommendations accordingly.
- Examples of accommodations include:
  - Extended test time or distraction-reduced testing environment
  - Alternative formats for instructional materials
  - Flexibility in attendance or assignment deadlines when medically necessary

#### Instructor Role in Providing Accommodations

Occupational therapy faculty play a vital role in implementing reasonable accommodations by:

- Collaborating with the UWL Disability Resource Center to understand each student's approved accommodations.
- Ensuring timely and confidential application of accommodations in the classroom, lab, and online environments.
- Adjusting teaching strategies, materials, or testing formats in ways that support student access while maintaining academic integrity.
- Working with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and fieldwork sites to implement accommodations in clinical settings as appropriate.

- Referring students back to the Disability Resource Center if additional needs arise or if clarification of accommodations is needed.

Instructors respect student privacy and promote a culture of inclusion, ensuring that all students can succeed and fully engage in their professional education.

### 5. Fieldwork Considerations

- **Students completing fieldwork are also provided access to all UWL resources including but not limited to:**
  - **Student Health Center**
  - Disability Resource Center-approved accommodations, coordinated with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and site supervisors
    - Fieldwork sites are informed of any necessary accommodations to support student success and legal compliance.

# **SECTION J**

## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A**  
**UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN**  
**LA CROSSE**  
**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

**PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR NOTIFICATION**

Issued to: \_\_\_\_\_(student name)\_\_\_\_\_ On: \_\_\_\_\_(date)\_\_\_\_\_

This written notification serves as official documentation that the UWLacrosse Occupational Therapy faculty have noted a professional behavior concern which does not meet the expectations for professional behaviors as outlined in the student manual.

Has verbal notice been given and documented regarding this concern?    Y        N

Description of Behavior Observed:

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Professional Behavior Category:

- |                                              |                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Knowledge              | <input type="radio"/> Relationships                               |
| <input type="radio"/> Commitment to Learning | <input type="radio"/> Affective/Moral                             |
| <input type="radio"/> Technical Skills       | <input type="radio"/> Habits of Mind                              |
| <input type="radio"/> Communication-Writing  | <input type="radio"/> Advocacy for Client/Advocacy for Profession |
| <input type="radio"/> Integrative            | <input type="radio"/> Personal Wellness                           |
| <input type="radio"/> Context                |                                                                   |

Faculty Recommendations for Remediation:

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Following the receipt of this notice, the student will create a success plan with the support of their faculty advisor within 7 days which will include behavior expectation goal, strategies to meet the goal, and a timeline.

Signature of this document acknowledges receipt of the professional behaviors notification:

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*a copy of this notification will be sent to the student, student's advisor, program director and filed in the student's department file or Navigate Advising system

## Appendix B

### Success Plan for (Add student name)

Date:

The following learning contract was created following an advising meeting between (list all attendees and titles) on (date)

Areas of Concern	Expected Performance	Strategies	Assessment (to ensure progress)	Timeframe/Faculty

This contract will serve to ensure accountability and growth throughout the remainder of the program in preparation for performance and clinical reasoning in the clinic and upcoming Level II Fieldwork opportunities. Progress will be monitored through identified timelines including a follow up advising session with your advisor and the program director.  
Follow up with occur on (date).

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Your signature acknowledges acceptance of the above success plan.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date:  
Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_ Date:  
Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_ Date:  
OTS

## Appendix C

## University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program's Self -Assessment of Professional Behaviors Form

The Occupational Therapy Program Director and Faculty Advisors value and encourage a student therapist's development of a professional identity. Professional Identity is developed, in part through the self- reflection of an individual's professional behaviors, motivations and actions. Results of self- reflection, along with feedback from mentors, may lead to the development of an action plan which will foster the development of quality professional behaviors. The professional behaviors and values listed below are consistent with our occupational therapy curriculum, current licensure laws, standards of practice, and Code of Ethics which guide the practice of occupational therapy.

Underdeveloped skill (0-2)	Emerging skills (3-5)	Proficient (6-8)	Exceptional skills (9-10)
Performance underdeveloped; needs to improve on skills and behaviors	Required skills and behaviors are developing but a bit inconsistent, continues to need more work to become proficient	Consistent solid performance	Surpass all requirements. Exceptional performance.

Professional Behavior	Score	Description
<b>Knowledge:</b> Core Knowledge, Information management, able to apply knowledge in real world situations, can use tacit knowledge and personal experiences, able to use abstract problem solving, generates questions to promote learning, uses resources to foster learning		
<b>Commitment to Learning:</b> learning is self-directed, seeks out and is interested in finding new knowledge, recognizes gaps in knowledge, able to learn from experiences, comes prepared to learn for all classes.		
<b>Technical Skills:</b> Uses all aspects of the Occupational Therapy Framework: Domain and Process throughout the implementation of occupational therapy, anticipates client's needs, adheres to safety policies and procedures, teaches others (ie, clients) effectively, using health literacy skills, asks for assistance and clarification when needed. <b>Clinical Writing:</b> Effectively documents, using a variety of formats in labs and also on FW I when required.		

<b>Academic:</b> Writes clearly, for varied audiences, using good technical writing skills, including reasoning/logical sequences		
<b>Integrative</b> Incorporates scientific principles, uses clinical judgment Uses clinical reasoning strategies appropriately Links academic and clinical knowledge effectively across disciplines Manages uncertainty		
<b>Context:</b> Can transfer and generalize skills from one situation to another, adjusts behavior to meet the contextual needs, uses and manages time efficiently and effectively, comes prepared for class and group work, acts proactively, plans ahead. Able to anticipate a need for change and implement a plan of action.		
<b>Relationships:</b> Communicates effectively with peers, professors, clinicians. ( e.g. Written/emails and oral), meets interpersonal commitments, gives and receives feedback effectively, takes personal responsibility for actions, handles conflict effectively, manages teamwork by contributing fair share to group efforts, teaches others effectively, alters behaviors, when needed, in response to feedback		
<b>Affective/Moral:</b> able to tolerate ambiguity, shows respect for peers and clients, responsive to client's needs, is caring, considers the good of society Adheres to AOTA Codes of Ethics, UWL Policies and Procedures, professional codes and standards. Emotional Intelligence: ability to perceive, control, and evaluate emotions.		
<b>Habits of Mind:</b> <i>Definition: habits of mind are those habits that allow the practitioner to be attentive, curious, self aware and willing to recognize errors. These are very difficult to objectify but make for good practice. (Epstein, 2007)</i> Aware of own strengths/challenges, attentiveness, critical curiosity, recognition of and response to cognitive and emotional bias, demonstrates willingness to acknowledge and correct errors, manages and adapts to change effectively (flexibility), aware of own feelings and		



## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENT HANDBOOK

how this may influence judgment/reasoning.		
<b>Advocacy for Occupational Therapy and Patient Advocacy</b> Involvement and investment in the following: SOTA, AOTA, WOTA Promotes Occupational Therapy Profession Supports and demonstrates ways to advocate for patient groups, underserved populations.		
<b>Wellness</b> Identifies methods/plan for personal health and wellness		

List your Strengths:	List your Challenges:

Write three goals you hope to achieve in the semester	Describe how you will achieve each goal ---PLAN
1.	
2.	
3.	

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Student Signature:

Date:

Academic Advisor Signature:

Date:

**NOTE:** Bring this form to ALL of your advising sessions. At each session, be prepared to: Describe how you have achieved (or did not achieve) your goals; Establish new or reformat your goals in order to accomplish your goals.

**References:**

Rubric was adapted from the University of California- San Jose, Pam Richardson

Epstein, R.M., MD Hundert, E. *Defining and assessing professional competencies, JAMA, 2002: 287 (2): 226-235.*