

UW-L Occupational Therapy Mission Statement

"The University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse Occupational Therapy program graduates entry level occupational therapist leaders who are committed to providing excellent occupation centered, person centered, evidence-based occupational therapy that is grounded in foundational sciences."

Philosophy of the Profession

The faculty of the UW-L Occupational Therapy Program adopt and embrace the following AOTA philosophy of the profession (AOTA, 2011).

Occupations are activities that bring meaning to the daily lives of individuals, families, and communities 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. As such, participation in meaningful occupation is a determinant of health.

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

The focus and outcome of occupational therapy are individuals' engagement in meaningful occupations that support their participation in life situations. Occupational therapy practitioners conceptualize occupations as both a means and an end to 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 may be used for health promotion and wellness, remediation or restoration, health maintenance, disease and injury prevention, and compensation/adaptation. The use of occupation to promote individual, community and population health is the core of occupational therapy practice, education, research, and advocacy.

Beliefs about Humans and Occupation

In addition to adopting the philosophy of the profession of occupational therapy, we believe that the Occupational Therapy Framework: Domain and Processes (AOTA, 2014) is a useful way to organize thinking about occupational performance. The components of the Domain (Areas of Occupation, Performance Skills, Performance Patterns, Context, Activity Demands, and Client Factors) are influenced by the individual's genetics, development, personal preferences, culture, environment, and social/political factors (McColl, M.A., Law, M.C., & Stewart, D., 2015). We believe that humans have a transactional relationship with their environment (Dunn, McLain, Brown, & Youngstrom, 2003). Not only does the environment affect the individual's occupational performance, the individual can have an impact on the environment. We believe that the occupations that we engage in today have an effect on our future health.

Participation in meaningful occupations enhances the quality of life, supports self-actualization, and improves occupational balance. (AOTA, 2007)

The common division of occupation into categories of work, leisure, self-care, and sleep may not be universal (Hammell, KW, 2009), thus a client-centered approach becomes essential. We believe that excellent occupational therapy is person centered and addresses each individual client's occupational performance: the ability to perform desired and needed occupations in whatever context the client functions. We endorse the following statement: "Occupational therapists view humans as occupational beings, and engagement in dignified and meaningful occupations is as fundamental to the experience of health and wellbeing as eating, drinking, and being loved." (Kronenberg & Pollard, p. 58). We believe that occupational therapy can occur wherever humans are engaged in purposeful activity and that occupational therapists facilitate occupational performance through direct provision of services, consultation, and advocacy.

References:

- American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) (2014). Occupational therapy practice framework: Domain and process. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 68(Suppl. 1), S1-S48.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2014.682006>
- American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) (2011). The philosophical base of occupational therapy. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 65(Suppl.), S65.
[doi:10.5014/ajot.2011.65S65](http://dx.doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2011.65S65)
- American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) (2007). Philosophy of occupational therapy education. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 57, 640.
- Dunn, W., McLain, L.H., Brown, C., & Youngstrom, M.J. (2003). The ecology of human performance. In E. Crepeau, E. Cohn, & B. Schell (Eds.), *Willard & Spackman's Occupational Therapy* (pp. 223-227). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.
- Hammel, KW. (2009). Sacred texts: A skeptical exploration of the assumptions underpinning theories of occupation. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 76, 6-13.
- Kronenberg, F.& Pollard, N. (2005). Overcoming occupational apartheid: A preliminary exploration of the political nature of occupational therapy. In (F. Kronenberg, S. Algado, & N. Pollard (Eds.), *Occupational Therapy Without Borders: Learning From the Spirit of Survivors* (p. 58). New York: Elsevier.
- McColl, M.A., Law, M.C. & Stewart, D.S. (2015). *Theoretical basis of occupational therapy* (3rd Ed). Thorofare NJ: Slack.

Beliefs About How Students Learn:

The UW-L Occupational Therapy faculty endorse the Philosophy of Occupational Therapy Education statement (AOTA, 2007). Each faculty member has a personal philosophy of teaching/learning.

Collectively, as a faculty, we endorse the following ideas:

- Learning requires active involvement from the students.
- The unique characteristics of the learner (personal background and experiences, learning styles, motivation, etc.), the nature of the learning activity, and the learning conditions set by the instructor interact in all learning environments.
- Because we are teaching practitioners of occupational therapy, our ultimate goal is skilled, thoughtful application of knowledge (Schell & Schell, 2008).
- Knowledge is acquired sequentially, builds on prior knowledge and gains in complexity. Implemented by using Blooms taxonomy (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2000) as an organizing frame for the sequence of coursework, the depth of the course objectives and the types of learning activities used.
 - In the cognitive domain, we see learning as developmental and believe that carefully created learning experiences can guide students to acquire deeper knowledge. We believe that new information is most effectively used when coupled to previously learned information, thus core concepts are introduced, revisited, expanded on and applied throughout the curriculum to promote the student's learning by building on the students' existing knowledge.
 - In the affective domain, we see guided self-reflection, peer and supervisor feedback, and faculty mentoring through advising as effective methods to socialize the students into the affective values and professional behaviors of the Occupational Therapy profession.
 - Finally, in the psychomotor domain, we believe that skills are gained through guided practice, repetition of activities, apprenticeship, and self-reflection.
- Hands on learning activities increase the students' motivation for learning as well as provide opportunities for practice and application of content.
- Repetition of the concept at more depth and complexity increases the students depth of understanding and ability to use the concept

Educational and Assessment Approaches

Our faculty believe that effective teaching incorporates multiple teaching strategies and requires continual formative and summative assessment of student learning. The general link between our philosophy of teaching/learning, our educational approach and our assessment methods is illustrated in the table below. Each course syllabus contains specific educational approaches and assessment methods for the student learning objectives in that course.

Philosophical Belief	Examples of Educational Approach(s)	Examples of Assessment Approach(s)
Learning requires active student engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active learning classroom exercises • Laboratory activities for guided practice • Integrated Fieldwork Experiences (see Description of Fieldwork Program) • Discussion • “Flipped” classroom • Case studies (paper and video) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignments • Demonstrated skills • Competency checks • Practical examinations • Interview and documentation of Interview • Participation (graded) • Documenting observations
Learning involves interaction of learner characteristics with the learning activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindful faculty effort to make connections between coursework obvious to students • Variety of teaching and assessment methods used in different contexts to facilitate learning (i.e. visual, lecture, participation, videos, create product, etc.) • Assignments requiring application of basic science in conditions and interventions. • Case studies (paper and video) • Use of technology as supplement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies • Examinations • Group and individual classroom presentations • Basic Science Integration
Skilled, thoughtful application of knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Exercises • Small group work (case studies) • Laboratory experiences for guided practice • Guided self-reflection • Apprenticeship in fieldwork experiences • Feedback from fieldwork educator that is discussed with advisor and incorporated in professional development plans • Case Studies (paper and video) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research papers • Case study analysis • Critique of assessment • Self-evaluation of performance on assignments • Fieldwork evaluations of performance • Competency checks and practical examinations • Self-reflection activities • Reflection on own participation in group projects
Cognitive knowledge is developmental, and built on prior knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives/learning activities facilitate learning at different depths of understanding depending on the specific content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study analysis • Exams • Research papers • Integrative assignments • Graded discussion & participation

Philosophical Belief	Examples of Educational Approach(s)	Examples of Assessment Approach(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives/learning activities are developmental within a course and across courses. • Learning methods include presentation, questioning, group learning, teacher facilitated explicit connections between current content and previously learned information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One to three minute papers • Quizzes
Affective knowledge is socialization of students into the values and behaviors of the profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional behaviors advising threaded throughout the curriculum (see Advising of Professional Behaviors Throughout the Curriculum • Guided self-reflection • Peer feedback on group projects • Supervisor feedback from fieldwork • Faculty mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student self-reflection papers • Student response to D2-L discussion questions • Student self-evaluation of performance on assignments and fieldwork • Professional development assignment • Regularly scheduled advising.
Psychomotor skills are learned through practice, feedback, and self-reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laboratory experiences for guided practice • Authentic community experiences (integrated fieldwork) • Fieldwork I and Fieldwork II • Self-reflection • Adult and Pediatric Labs • Conduct assessments in variety of contexts (home, work site, play, etc.) • Create intervention plans for a variety of conditions, populations, treatment contexts. • Provide interventions for adults and children in clinical lab setting • Document various steps of the occupational therapy process for different populations, conditions, and treatment contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical examination (demonstrate skill) • Grant proposal • EBP Paper • Competency checks • Evaluation of performance on fieldwork (both Level I and Level II)

References:

- American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) 2007. Philosophy of occupational therapy education. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 61, 678.
- Schell, J. & Schell, B. (2008). Teaching for expert practice. In B. Schell & J. Schell (Eds), *Clinical and professional reasoning in occupational therapy* (pp. 258-288). Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins.
- Anderson L.W. & Krathwohl, D.R. (2000). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Parson, Allyn & Bacon.

University of Wisconsin Occupational Therapy Program Goals

1.0 Admit the most qualified students and support them through successful completion of the program.

- Minimum overall GPA of 3.0
- Return second year of program
- complete didactic course work in 24 months
- complete Fieldwork II in 6 months after didactic coursework

2.0 Develop competent generalist practitioners who are prepared to provide occupation centered, client centered occupational therapy that is informed by evidence. (Mission of Program Implemented)

- Pass Fieldwork II on first try
- Pass NBCOT certification examination on first try
- Student learning outcomes met
- Employed in field within 6 months of graduation

3.0 Develop entry level occupational therapists who display the professional behaviors consistent with those of the profession.

- Demonstrate entry level professional behaviors on Fieldwork II

4.0 Retain and develop faculty and IAS to maintain excellence in teaching and currency in content area.

- Set and meet teaching effectiveness and content currency goals annually on PDP
- Participate in faculty development activities annually
- Collective SEI ratings for program are at or above 4.0

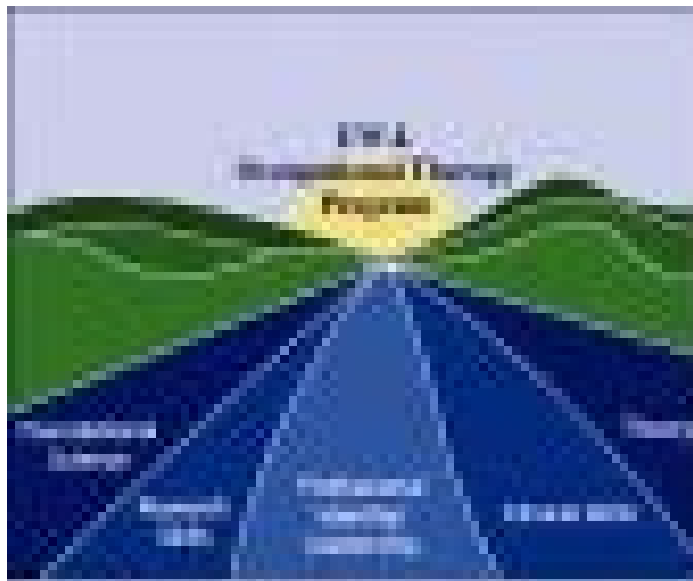
5.0 Graduates, Alumni, and employers are satisfied with academic preparation

- Students evaluate each Fieldwork II placement (using SEFWE)
- Graduates are satisfied with academic preparation
- Alumni are satisfied with academic preparation
- Employers are satisfied with UW-L graduate academic preparation

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 theory**. Some of these threads are emphasized at different points in the curriculum (i.e. foundational sciences occur in the first year and clinical skills is more heavily emphasized in the last year).



*Graphic by Katrina Veto
Class of 2008*

Foundational Science forms the basis of scientific 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 and developmental delays. The rigorousness of these courses and the scientific reasoning used in them gives students a solid foundation for learning and practicing the occupational therapy process and developing clinical reasoning. These foundational science courses occur in the first year of the curriculum. Students are then asked to apply foundational science concepts in other coursework, including fieldwork. Examples include explain: the medical condition using foundational science concepts, the “science” behind treatment interventions, and the validity of a new intervention based on the “science” of the proposed mechanism of change.

Scholarly Practice Skills are needed to approach everyday occupational therapy practice with scholarly rigor. Learning the skills and rigor of evidence-based practice (EBP) helps students develop professional reasoning (Coster, 2008). An evidence-based practitioner has the tools to make ethical and effective evaluation and intervention choices. A scholarly clinician is precise in administering evaluations, interpretation of data, and documentation. The coursework in this thread includes content that helps student develop the skills needed to be a scholarly occupational therapist. Evidence based applications are woven into other courses, including fieldwork, to promote application of EBP concepts in different treatment contexts and with different populations.

Professional Identity/Leadership is the thread that encompasses how students implement their skills and knowledge as a student and a therapist. The coursework in this thread emphasizes collaborating in teams, assuming leadership roles, internalizing a strong professional identity, demonstrating ability to practice with minimal supervision, valuing life-long learning, serving as a person centered advocate for the client and supporting/ promoting the profession of occupational therapy. Therapeutic use of self, multicultural sensitivity and professional behaviors are strongly emphasized throughout the coursework and all fieldwork experiences.

Clinical Skills include the knowledge and skills that occupational therapists use to make decisions at each step of the occupational therapy process. Courses in this thread include focus on occupational performance problems encountered by various populations in different practice settings (both current and emerging) as well as assessment and intervention options.

Theory provides guides for understanding practice situations, considering assessment and intervention options, selecting the intervention, timing and method of delivery (Coster, 2008). Occupational therapy theories are applied in the clinical skills thread in context with populations and practice settings.

Relationship of Threads to Occupational Therapy Program Mission Statement

The mission and the philosophy of the occupational therapy program drive the curriculum design. The relationship of the curricular threads with each of the concepts in the mission and the philosophy appear below.

Concept in Mission	Curriculum Thread
Entry level occupational therapists (generalists)	Clinical Skills, Theory, Foundational Science, Leadership, Scholarly Practice
Effective Leaders	Leadership
Occupation-Centered	Clinical Skills, Theory
Client-Centered	Clinical Skills
Evidence-Based	Scholarly Practice
Concept in Philosophy	Curriculum Thread
Occupations provide meaning and allow participation in society.	Foundational Science, Theory, Clinical Skills
Participation in meaningful occupation is a determinant of health.	Theory, Clinical Skills
Occupations occur in a variety of contexts; occupational performance is unique to each individual.	Foundational Science, Theory, Clinical Skills, 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.	Theory Thread, Clinical Skills
Focus of occupational therapy is individual's engagement in meaningful occupations that support participation in life.	Foundational Science, Theory, Clinical Skills, Leadership, Scholarly Practice.

Scope of the Curriculum

Our mission, “to graduate entry level occupational therapist leaders who are committed to providing excellent occupation-centered, person-centered, evidence-based occupational therapy based on foundational science”, drives decisions about the scope of our curriculum. Based on the practice areas of our graduates, we continue to conclude that the best preparation for our graduates is grounding in foundational science, evidence based practice, and clinical knowledge and skills in mental health, physical dysfunction, and pediatric settings. With continued professional development, UW-graduates are prepared to work in emerging practice settings.

We have included in the curriculum...

- A stronger emphasis on mental illness and psychosocial factors since generalist practice requires the ability to competently address occupational performance problems with people with a variety of problems.
- Four courses in physical dysfunction (orthopedics, neurology, older adult, PAMS), two courses in pediatrics, and two courses in mental health (mental illness and psychosocial factors) to allow time for the students to develop the depth of expertise needed to assess and plan interventions in these areas.
- Coursework on PAMS removed from physical dysfunction courses to be a separate course in the summer to allow time for connection of PAMS and occupation based practice and increase emphasis on intervention planning in other courses.
- Two client labs (adult and pediatric) to develop clinical skills prior to level II fieldwork
- Fieldwork experience of some kind occurs each semester (Description of Fieldwork Program)
- Level I fieldwork in each of the three content areas allows the students to apply concepts and practice skills. These fieldwork experiences occur in the close time proximity to the didactic content to facilitate application of concepts to the clinical setting and to connect observations from the fieldwork I with didactic course content.

We have not included in the curriculum...

- Knowledge and skills that are considered post-entry level (such as specialized hand therapy, demonstrated competence in lymphedema, etc.)
- A research project that requires independent research and knowledge creation. We believe that students at this level of clinical and educational preparation need to be informed and skilled consumers of scientific literature, familiar with measuring own clinical outcomes, rigorous enough to participate in research studies through data collection, and able to design and conduct small, valuable studies (inter-rater reliability studies with colleagues on test instruments, single case studies, etc.).
- The rural course was carried over from the bachelor's program but it no longer fit the mission of the program. It was eliminated and the relevant objectives/assignments moved to the scholarly practice course.

Curriculum Sequence

The overall sequence of courses was designed to steep the students with foundational science courses early so these science concepts become the knowledge that is the foundation for student's building their

occupational therapy knowledge base. The first year also includes coursework on the building blocks of occupational therapy practice: patient handling, ethics, introduction to occupational therapy, activity analysis, and group leadership.

The end of the first year and first semester of second year is focused on using the foundational science and foundational occupational therapy building blocks to develop clinical skills with different populations in different contexts. There are various points of integration throughout the curriculum

- The critical analysis of practice courses (CAP) in the 3rd and 5th semester provide students with the opportunity to integrate content from all courses taught in that semester using case studies. The CAP 2 course, taught in the fall 2 semester uses data that students collect on their physical dysfunction fieldwork in the summer as the basis of a case study that they develop during the semester.
- There is some sort of fieldwork experience in each semester of the program. Integrated fieldwork experiences are designed to familiarize the students with a variety of different intervention settings, reinforce course content by applying it to real-life settings, begin to build clinical skills, and develop beginning professional behaviors. Level I Fieldwork is primarily designed to give students exposure to a specific population in different intervention contexts and to help the students continue to develop professional behaviors. Two of the Three Level 1 fieldwork experiences are full time for 1 week to give the student an immersion experience in an occupational therapy setting. Since the population and contexts are different with each of the level I experiences, we do not expect students to develop more proficient skills by the end of the program. However, we do expect the students' professional behaviors to develop over all of the fieldwork experiences. The debriefing after the fieldwork I placements provides excellent opportunities for integration between the clinic and the classroom.
- Patient laboratories for children and adult clients are designed to give students the opportunity to apply the entire occupational therapy process with one adult and one child. Students are expected to demonstrate specific skills to a level of competency and continue growth in professional behaviors. They are supervised (2 students to 1 clinician) and given extensive feedback to help them develop competencies and to become comfortable accepting and learning from feedback. The curricular threads (i.e. foundational science, theory, clinical skills, scholarly practice, and professional identity/leadership) are integrated into the student's intervention plan for the client. Both of these laboratories are placed in the spring 3 semester (last semester on campus) to aid in the transition from student to student therapist by having a caseload of 2 clients.
- The fieldwork II experiences at the end of the didactic content are designed for the student to reach entry level competency in clinical knowledge and skills and professional behaviors. The threads of the curriculum are integrated through assignments (i.e. case study, EBP project, observation/participation in leadership and advocacy experiences.

References:

Coster, W. (2008). Curricular approaches to professional reasoning for evidence-based practice. In B. Schell & J. Schell (Eds), *Clinical and Professional Reasoning in Occupational Therapy* (pp. 311-334). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Masters of Science in Occupational Therapy Curriculum Grid

Thread	Summer 1 (8)	Fall 1 (16)	Spring I (16)	Summer 2 (5)	Fall 2 (16)	Winter (1)	Spring 2 (14)	Sum 3 (6)	Fall 3 (6)
Foundational Sciences	OT 523 (3) Human Physiology	OT 524 (5) Anatomy OT 526 (2) Movement OT544 (1) Bio/Kinesiology OT545 (1) Applied Bio/Kinesiology	OT 611 (2) Pathophysiology OT 515 (3) Neuroanatomy						
Professional Identity/ Leadership			OT 775 (1) Critical Analysis of Practice I (PBL)		OT 775 (1) Critical Analysis of Practice II (PBL)		OT 641 (3) Health Care Systems OT 630 (2) OT Practice: Wellness		
Research Skills		OT 550 (1) SP I: Assessment OT 551 (1) SP 1: Applied Assessment	OT 750 (2) SP II: OT Research OT 751 (1) SP II: Applied Research	OT 760 (3) Scholarly Practice III: Research Seminar	OT 770 (2) SP IV: EBP OT 799 (TBA)* Thesis (optional)		OT 780 (1) SP V: Scientific Writing OT 781 (1) SP V: Applied Scientific Writing		
Clinical Skills	OT 521 (2) Professional Foundations of Practice	OT 570 (1) OT Intervention: Group Dynamics OT571 (1) OT Int: Applied Group Dynamics OT 530 (2) Occupational Performance Analysis OT 531 (1) Applied OPA	OT 660 (2) Occupational Performance: Mental Illness OT 661 (1) OP: Applied Mental Illness OT 670 (2) Occupational Performance: Phys Dys I OT 671 (1) OP: Applied Phys Dys 1	OT 700 (1) Physical Agent Modalities	OT 730 (2) OP: Phys Dys II OT 731 (1) OP: Applied Phys Dys II OT 650 (2) O&I: Peds I OT 651 (1) O&I: Applied Peds 1 OT 640 (1) Therapeutic Adaptations OT 776 (2) O&I: Older Adult OT 777 (1) O&I: Applied Older Adult OT 778 (2) Impact of Psychosocial Issues on Occupation OT 779 (1) Applied Psychosocial		OT 740 (3) O&I: Peds II OT 741 (1) O&I: Applied Peds II OT 726 (1) Fieldwork Seminar OT 785 (1) Adult Clinical Practice OT 786 (1) Applied ACP		
Theory	OT 520 (3) Intro to OT								
Fieldwork			OT 573 (1) Mental Illness	OT 790 (1) Phys Dys		OT 791 (1) Pediatrics		OT 795* (6) FW-II	OT 795* (6) FW-II

Note: Courses printed in red are taken with other health profession students and taught by Health Professions Faculty/ Courses printed in blue are taught for OT students by Health Professions Faculty
 OT 723 International Seminar is an elective course taught each spring. It may be taken in both the first and second year. OT 798 (Independent Study) is taught by arrangement with OT faculty;
 OT 720 (Select Topics) will be periodically taught as an elective during Fall II or Spring II semester;

*If the student wishes to take the Thesis option (OT 799), it is begun in the spring of the second year and OT 795 OT Fieldwork will be delayed until Fall 3 and Spring 3

Academic Objectives

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

1. apply foundational 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 occupational performance.
 - Formulate intervention plans that facilitate the client's occupational performance.
 - Implement intervention plans that facilitate the client's occupational performance
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.