

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program Academic 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. <http://www.uwlax.edu/Student-Life/Student-handbook/>

Grading Scale:

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

A	93-100
AB	88-92
B	83-87
BC	78-82
C	70-77
Grades below C are considered failing	

Coursework Policies

- 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.
- The faculty recognize that unexpected events occur that may interfere with attendance. 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 course instructor as soon as possible. Vacations and work should be planned around the university schedule.
 - 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, practical 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.

- Extra Credit

Faculty expect that students will master the course material because it represents a minimum level of knowledge and skills needed for clinical practice. 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.

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.

- Failure of course(s).

If a grade of D or F is received, students will be withdrawn from the program and graduate studies. 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 will 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.

- Minimum Cumulative GPA:

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.

- Academic Probation

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 in this time frame results in an automatic dismissal from the occupational therapy program, which will result in an automatic withdrawal from UW-L Graduate Studies.

Dismissal from the Occupational Therapy Program -Academic

- Students will be automatically dismissed from the program if they obtain grades of less than "C" (i.e. D or F) in any two courses throughout the eight semester program (this includes both didactic and fieldwork courses).

- Students will be automatically dismissed from the program if they obtain grades of less than “C” (i.e. D or F) in any two courses in the curriculum in one semester.
- 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.
- Once a student has been dismissed from the Occupational Therapy Program, the student is not allowed to attend any courses within the program.

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

Academic Policies for Graduate Studies can be located at: <http://www.uwlax.edu/Graduate-studies/Academic-policies/>

Dismissal from the Occupational Therapy Program: Non-academic

- 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 be aware 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 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 and an individualized remediation plan will be developed with the advisor/program director. Student failure to adhere to the remediation plan in the established time frames will result in dismissal from the program. These actions of the program may be appealed.

Changes in Status in the Program

WARNING – Applies to dropping a course, leaves of absence, or withdrawals from the program.

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 a given 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 they may not return to classes.

Dropping a Course

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

- The registrars' webpage lists specific deadline dates for dropping a course and tuition refund information.
- Dropping a course has significant financial and professional ramifications for the student and students are requested to seek advice before making this significant 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.

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** (i.e. **not on probation or failing courses**). In order 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 order to return to the program (i.e. such as medical clearance to return to school, etc.) Re-entry to the program is not guaranteed.

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 4th 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, at a later date, 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 program director.
- Consult 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 the program.

Progression through the Program

The occupational therapy curriculum has been designed to be completed in a sequential fashion. Progression through the curriculum requires successful completion of coursework and demonstration of mandatory professional behaviors. Students are advised that failure to demonstrate sufficient mandatory professional behaviors may result in either a delay in progression through the program or serve as grounds for dismissal from the program. Additional tuition will be required if progression is delayed.

Individual Coursework

Some courses are inter-related within a single semester, thus courses are taught in sequence and only one time per year. Students must complete all coursework within each given semester *and* remain in good academic standing in order to progress to the next semester coursework.

Semester

The occupational therapy curriculum is sequential. Each semester's coursework builds on material from the previous semester. Students must complete each semester in sequence and in good academic standing before progression is permitted to the next semester. 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.

Fieldwork II

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.

Graduation

Students must successfully complete both the academic and fieldwork portions of the curriculum to qualify for graduation. Fieldwork must be completed within 24 months after the completion of the academic portion of the curriculum. Both the academic and fieldwork portions must be completed within 7 years after beginning the program (Graduate Studies Academic Standard) <http://www.uwlax.edu/Graduate-studies/Academic-policies/>

Certification and Credentialing

After graduation, students may request an official transcript from UW-L records and registration are eligible to sit for the NBCOT certification examination. States that have licensure requirements may grant the license based on 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.*** Some states grant temporary licenses to graduates who have finished their academic programs and are waiting to take the NBCOT certification examination. If you are hired during this time period, you **must** have a temporary or permanent license to practice even if the facility says it will be acceptable as long as someone supervises your work. It is not acceptable and practicing without a license is a serious legal offense that may prohibit you from ever obtaining a license to practice occupational therapy.

DUAL DEGREE STUDENTS Dismissal from the occupational therapy program carries particular additional implications for Dual Degree students. Dual Degree students should consult their psychology advisor for questions regarding dual degree coursework for the completion of their bachelors' degree in Psychology.

Withdrawal from the OT Program: Dual Degree Students

In the event that a dual degree student cannot or chooses not to complete the Occupational Therapy Program, the student may withdraw from the Occupational Therapy Program and from graduate studies and complete their Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology. In this event:

- All Occupational Therapy courses that are already part of an Occupational Therapy-Psychology substitution that have been taken, and in which a passing grade has been obtained, will be acceptable on the Psychology major and will count toward the completion of the Bachelors of Science degree in Psychology.
- Any Psychology major requirements which have not been taken, either a Psychology course or an Occupational Therapy-Psychology substitution will need to be completed before the degree can be granted.
- Any additional Occupational Therapy courses that were taken that were not part of an Occupational Therapy-Psych substitution will count as undergraduate credits taken at the 400 level.

The procedures for withdrawal from the Occupational Therapy Program are printed in the Student Withdrawal section of the Occupational Therapy Student Handbook. In addition, the following procedures apply to Dual-Degree Students.

- It is the Dual-Degree student's responsibility to consult the timetable for specific deadline dates and tuition refund information. Withdrawal must follow the university timelines to be processed and to receive any potential tuition refund.
- As soon as the decision is made to withdraw, the Dual-Degree student must immediately contact the undergraduate psychology dual degree advisor to begin planning for completion of the Bachelor of Science degree in psychology. Students are advised that failure to contact this advisor in a timely manner may result in the inability to register for classes and potential delays in completion of the Bachelor's degree.
- Occupational Therapy Program faculty will contact the Psychology dual degree advisor to officially inform him/her that the student will not be completing the Occupational Therapy Program. If a student wishes to continue to pursue a Masters of Science degree in Occupational Therapy after completion of the Bachelors of Science Degree in Psychology, he/she must apply for readmission to the Occupational Therapy Program. If accepted, the faculty will determine which, if any, of the previously successfully completed courses will be counted towards completion of the degree. This decision will be based on the grades achieved in the course, length of time since course was taken, and the equivalency of the course previously taken with the course currently being taught.

University of Wisconsin – La Crosse Occupational Therapy Program Appeals Policies

Academic Grade Appeals

Students who believe that the grade they received for a course does not reflect their performance in that course may dispute the grade and appeal. The University policy states that a grade appeal must take place before the end of the term immediately following the term in which the grade was recorded. However, 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 within 4 weeks of the posting of the grade. If the student does not accept the 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 6 weeks of the posting of the grade with a copy 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.
 - 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 audiotape.

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.

LEVEL 2: Occupational Therapy Program Director

NOTE: If the Occupational Therapy Program director was involved in the initial appeal hearing or is the instructor of the course, this step is omitted.

The request to appeal the grade will be put in writing and addressed to the program director within 5 working days of receipt of the instructor's decision.

- The appeal will contain the reason for the grade appeal and supporting materials.
- Acceptable reasons for the appeal are the same as listed in Level 1.
- The program director 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 program director, the student, and anyone else the student wishes to bring (if desired). The meeting will be recorded by notes and audiotape.
- The program director may seek additional information from the course instructor and/or student before rendering a judgment.

The possible outcomes of this appeal hearing are:

- Program director supports instructor and recommends that the grade should stand as given
- Program director recommends that the instructor change the grade.
- In both cases, if the student accepts the grade, the appeal process ends.
- In both cases, if the student does not accept the grade the grade appeal may be moved to the next level. The outcomes of the appeal will be documented by the program director and a copy sent to the student and placed in the student's file within 5 working days after the meeting.

LEVEL 3: Chair, Health Professions Department

The request to appeal the grade will be put in writing and addressed to the Health Professions Department Chair within 5 working days of the receipt of the decision of the Occupational Therapy Program director.

- The appeal will contain the reason for the grade appeal and supporting materials. Acceptable reasons for appeal are limited to the reasons noted above with the addition of the following: If the program director recommended a grade change to the instructor but the instructor did not change the grade.
- The department chair 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 department chair, the student, and anyone else the student wishes to bring (if desired). The meeting will be recorded by notes and audiotape.

- The department chair will speak to the course instructor after meeting with the student to gather information about the grading. The department chair may also formally seek additional information from the course instructor and/or student before rendering a judgment.

The possible outcomes of this appeal hearing are:

- Department chair supports instructor's grade and recommends that the grade should stand as given
- Recommends that the grade be changed to the course instructor.
- If the student accepts the department chairs decision and accept the grades, the process has ended.
- If the student does not accept the department chair decision and the grade, it may be appealed to the next level.

LEVEL 4: 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:

- 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 after deadline for receipt of the requested materials.

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.

Non Academic Appeals

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

Appeal Procedure Level I: 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.

Academic Dismissal

Students may appeal an academic dismissal from the program following the procedure posted at graduate studies:

[http://www.uwlax.edu/uploadedFiles/Offices-Services/Graduate_studies/Academic%20Dismissal%20Appeal\(2\).pdf](http://www.uwlax.edu/uploadedFiles/Offices-Services/Graduate_studies/Academic%20Dismissal%20Appeal(2).pdf)