

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.

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 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.

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 automatic dismissal from the program. These actions of the program may be appealed.

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.