



# **Cossatot Community College**

of the

# **University of Arkansas**

**(UA Cossatot)**

## **Occupational Therapy Assistant Program**

### **Student Handbook**

**&**

### **Policy Manual**

Reviewed: 8/2024  
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# OTA Program Student Handbook and Policy Manual

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UAC OTA 2024 - 2025

## Introduction

This Student Handbook and Policy Manual serves as a general introduction and guide for all UA Cossatot OTA students; it is specifically designed to inform students of academic policies, campus rules, and procedures as a complement to the college academic catalog. UA Cossatot encourages its students to seek out any of its personnel or faculty whenever questions arise. We hope many questions will be answered in this handbook and in the current issue of the college academic catalog. The academic catalog is available in print in the OTA Library and online on the UA Cossatot website. The OTA Student Handbook and Policy Manual is available in print in the OTA Library and online in Program Resources in Blackboard.

As part of the orientation process to the OTA Program, each student is asked to review the OTA student handbook and indicate understanding of student advising, grievance procedures, readmission criteria, transfers, attendance policy, call-in policy, chain of command, classroom behavior, dress code, courtesy, discipline, graduation policy, and grading policy. These policies are also covered in detail during the in-person OTA Orientation days prior to beginning the program. Copies of forms that will be used throughout the program and the OTA student handbook are posted and available on Blackboard.

It is each student's responsibility to read and follow all policies and procedures written in this handbook and the college academic catalog. It is strongly recommended that sections pertaining to the above topics be noted and read. The Program reserves the right to change any provision listed in the academic catalog and OTA Student Handbook without actual notice to individual students. The most current Student Handbook and Policy Manual is available for student use in Blackboard.



## Occupational Therapy Assistant Students

### Welcome

Welcome to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas (UA Cossatot). You are embarking on a wonderful and rewarding career. Our mission is to provide a worthy education to prepare students to become competent, contributing, entry-level occupational therapy assistant professionals.

We have included in this manual the information you need to get started and to carry you through the program. This information will help you understand the OTA program, the OTA curriculum, and the policies that relate to them. Please be certain to review handbook policies routinely throughout the course of the program.

We have a dedicated staff of professionals in the OTA program who are excited to share their knowledge with you. We encourage you to contact your faculty instructors, the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, or the Program Director when/if questions arise.

Sincerely,

Tamla Heminger, OTR, MEd  
UA Cossatot  
OTA Program Director

# **Occupational Therapy Assistant Program**

## **Institutional Context**

Cossatot Vocational-Technical School, founded in 1975, received accreditation from the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools in 1998. The College joined the University of Arkansas System and became Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas (CCCUA—UA Cossatot) in July 2001.

The College is a public two-year college serving over 1500 students each year. The College, located in Southwest Arkansas, maintains four campuses located in Sevier, Howard, and Little River Counties. The College serves students across Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas.

The College supports four academic divisions: The Division of General Education and Transfer, The Division of Professional Studies, The Division of Medical Education, and The Division of Skilled and Technical Sciences. Associate-level degrees, as well as a variety of certificate-level programs, exist in each division. Associate degree programs range from Associate of Applied Sciences, which are designed for immediate employment, to Associate of Science degrees, which are designed for 2+2 transfer purposes. The College maintains solid partnerships with several Arkansas four-year universities to deliver articulation agreements. Many Certificates of Proficiency and Technical Certificates also exist, a few examples include Accounting, Agriculture, Welding, Automotive, Cosmetology, Licensed Practical Nursing, and EMT. Several of the certificate programs are designed to stack into Associate-level degrees.

## **UA Cossatot Mission Statement**

As an institution of higher education, UA Cossatot is dedicated to serving students who wish to achieve academic, personal, or career goals. The College seeks to encourage in each student the values essential for effective citizenship, the desire for lifelong learning, the techniques for applying knowledge and skills to personal, career, and community life challenges, and an understanding that all individuals have worth and potential. To achieve these purposes, the College strives at all times to accomplish its mission:

UA Cossatot embraces diversity and is committed to improving the lives of those in our region by providing quality education, outstanding service, and relevant industry training.

## **OTA Program Mission Statement**

The OTA Program seeks to extend the mission of the College through its own mission and educational philosophy.

The mission of the UA Cossatot Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is to prepare highly competent, entry-level occupational therapy assistant professionals who can skillfully contribute to the existing and future diverse communities they will serve.

Graduates will:

- Act as leaders within their communities and as members of the profession
- Be the envoys of innovative approaches to practice, generating superior outcomes
- Demonstrate exceptional capability in providing service to rural populations, emphasizing the promotion of health and well-being
- Embrace the core values of both the profession and the College in all aspects of professional practice



# Program Philosophy

## *Philosophy of Humankind*

The OTA Program has developed a statement of philosophy to identify who we are but to also continue a common thread with the institute. We recognize the occupational therapy assistant as an integral part of a growing profession that works in many practice arenas and with individuals and populations of all ages from all cultures and backgrounds. We believe that the unique role of occupational therapy is to assist persons to competently engage in meaningful interaction with their human and non-human environment, in order to fulfill their occupational roles and participate in a variety of contexts. To fully express a philosophical statement reflecting a professional view of humankind, the program embraces the profession's statement regarding the *Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy* (AOTA, Commission on Education, in AJOT, Vol 71, 2017).

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.

## *Philosophy of Teaching and Learning*

The program's philosophy recognizes occupation and occupational performance as core elements for the organization of the curriculum, teaching-learning processes, and communications and interactions between students, faculty and the community. Occupational engagement is a core construct of the curriculum; it is a complex process of doing, being, and becoming. Purposeful occupation occurs through a complex integration of mind, spirit, and body and requires a continual process of adaptation. Through occupation, whether a client or a student, meaning is explored and achieved, health is enhanced, productivity and pleasure evolve, and life organizes and reorganizes.

## *Approaches to Teaching and Learning*

The education of an occupational therapy assistant must prepare a future practitioner who can ably facilitate change in individuals and groups for optimal occupational performance. To guide the manifestation of this complex and broad goal, the UA Cossatot Occupational Therapy Assistant Program adopts the principles of adult learning concepts expressed in Malcolm Knowles Principles of Andragogy (Knowles, M.S. (1980) The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Cambridge Books).

Stemming from both humanist and behaviorist traditions, Knowles' assumptions about how adult learning occurs supports how adult students best acquire increasingly complex professional knowledge and skills, revisit previously held experiences, ideas and beliefs and exit the educational experience with tools that enable lifelong pursuit of learning to occur. His six premises that define the adult learner include:

1. Self-directedness/self-concept of the learner
2. Accumulated reservoirs of experience that serve as learning resources
3. Readiness to learn and a growing orientation to the developmental tasks of the learner's social roles.
4. Application of knowledge that is increasingly tied to application and problem centeredness.
5. Internal motivation to learn.
6. The need to know why something should be learned.

The adult learner is most successful with learning incorporating *self-direction*. The learner achieves best when able to be proactive, carry responsibility for his or her own learning and is able to engage in challenges that are supportive of further growth and development. This helps to foster critical thinking. The educator utilizes behaviorally-based strategies to facilitate this process by following a model that involves assisting students in understanding their learning needs, identifying appropriate resources, selecting and implementing meaningful learning strategies, and facilitating the identified learning outcomes. The UA Cossatot occupational therapy curriculum design sequences the learning experience in ways designed to best facilitate adult learning, embracing Knowles ideas. Students are highly participatory in collaborative learning, allowing them to develop and expand their self-perceptions of their life roles and the task skills needed to fulfill them.

# Curriculum Design Conceptual Framework

## *Organizing Concepts*

The described approaches to teaching and learning are applied systematically to the content, scope and sequence of the program course offerings. As a means of identifying and organizing content two resources are selected, the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*, provides a framework for conveying the knowledge and skills of the profession. The document reflects the profession's current collective understanding of the meanings of occupation, the scope of the profession of occupational therapy and the professional approaches utilized in the delivery of all aspects of service within the profession. The *Person-Occupation-Environment-Performance Model* (PEO-P) is considered as a second organizing resource. The PEO-P Model is meaningful in conceptualizing a dynamic and holistic view of the person and his or her ability to complete activities within the context of occupational performance, particularly as it occurs and evolves throughout the lifespan. This view also can be applied to the evolution of each person from the role of student to the role of occupational therapy assistant professional as well. Throughout the program, faculty emphasizes the dynamic nature of the many ways occupation is expressed along with the impacts of individuality, group, culture and environment on occupational performance. Students repeatedly learn and integrate the profession's knowledge base and skills, reflecting on their own life roles and events and integrating these with the changes they experience through the learning process. Understanding healthy, adaptive occupational performance is contrasted with content addressing a range of disruptors and disabilities. As students learn to understand the profession's knowledge base and skills repertoire, they will also reflect on these dynamic and trans-active processes as they occur in their own life roles and events. They will learn firsthand the concept of fit, i.e., achievement of adaptive and accommodative occupational performance as they experience changes within themselves, changes in the contexts that impact their lives during the educational experience, and changes in their personal repertoire of occupations. By the end of the program, each graduate is able to use the concepts taught as a means of understanding and applying their professional expertise.

## **Fieldwork within the Program**

### *Level One Fieldwork and Service Learning*

To reinforce the program's key curricular concepts and engage students in professional roles and responsibilities early in their educational experience, the program includes a substantial number of hours of Level I fieldwork experiences, community service, and service-learning activities. Combined, these provide each student with a comprehensive amount of direct contact with individuals, populations, and organizations, focusing on concepts related to occupation and occupational therapy. Students are engaged in Level I fieldwork immediately upon entry into the program to begin applying both the philosophical concepts within the program's adult learning model and the organizing concepts that explain occupational

performance and occupational therapy. This allows them to be able to consider past personal life experiences and then assimilate those with new learning that is occurring in the classroom. Additionally, community service and service-learning projects are threaded throughout the program as a means to demonstrate application of new knowledge frameworks and relate these to their real and potential impact in the community. Service-learning projects are designed to address the needs of community residents across the life span and include activities such as injury prevention for babies, workplace back safety screening, ramp building projects, senior health fairs, kids college days, etc. These projects are designed so that students can begin to both appreciate individuals and groups engaged in successful occupational performance and also interact with those whose occupational performance is challenged.

Level I fieldwork is assigned for all three semesters in which students are completing didactic portions of study. These three fieldwork experiences have a specific focus that relates to the courses that are being taught concurrently but also have an inherent increasing complexity built into them, building on early knowledge and skills and then expanding the levels of information knowledge and skill integration. When combined, the three Level I fieldwork experiences provide a thoughtful and well-designed foundation for each student to proceed to Level II fieldwork.

### *Level Two Fieldwork*

Level II Fieldwork provides two eight-week capstone integrative learning opportunities during which occupational therapy assistant students can apply the scope of professional knowledge and skills acquired throughout the didactic program content. Each Level II placement is collaboratively developed between the program and the placement site so that the student will engage in learning that is compatible with the program's curriculum design focus.

## **Curricular Themes**

While the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. establishes a guide for the curriculum content and scope, the UA Cossatot Occupational Therapy Assistant Program also identifies several themes or threads that are critical to the evolution and scope of the program's coursework. They emphasize what the program considers to be highly valued in becoming an effective occupational therapy practitioner. These are:

- Occupation and the Occupational Therapy Process
- Professionalism and Ethics
- Professional Critical Thinking and Reasoning
- Diversity Factors in Life and in Practice
- Community Engagement and Leadership

## *Curriculum Sequence*

The sequencing of coursework incorporates Bloom's approach to learning. Course content is introduced applying an approach beginning with elemental core topics and moving to more complex topics. Throughout the program, the knowledge and skills base grow as concepts build in complexity to further develop complex, relational problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills. Students bring real-life examples and events to the classroom and use them as an important means of supporting key curriculum concepts.

Students admitted to the occupational therapy assistant program begin with a solid base of foundational general education coursework (*Composition I, Intermediate Algebra, College (Medical Education) Success Strategies, and Anatomy and Physiology I*). *Composition I* and the *Success Strategies* courses provide tools for utilizing and appreciating electronic and print resource materials and writing using accepted professional formats. The recommended course sequence continues to build foundational knowledge (*Developmental Psychology, Medical Terminology, and the second half of the Anatomy and Physiology* sequence). Students also complete as part of their general education courses *Micro-computer Applications, and Sociology*. Students use the knowledge in these courses to prepare for the advanced use and understanding of research to support occupation, and gaining knowledge of evidence-based practice as well as preparation for the online coursework they will complete in the final semester of the program.

Additionally, students enroll in their first program course, *Introduction to Occupational Therapy*. This course is accessed as an open enrollment class and is available to the student population at large each semester. This first OT course is an introduction to the foundations of the occupational therapy framework as well as the PEO-P Model. Students are introduced to the history of the OT profession, history of the OTA, theory, use of occupation, activity analysis, scholarly activity, and professionalism. While open to all, it is a requirement for formal admission to the program.

Once admitted into the program, students begin to build on foundational knowledge and skills with coursework that integrates it into a professional framework. *Human Movement in Occupational Therapy* and *Pathophysiology* expand and refine knowledge of human anatomy and physiology and begin to apply those areas to practice skills. *Therapeutic Activities I* explores occupation from a multi-faceted perspective and exposes students to the professional tools used by practitioners in planning and delivering occupational therapy services. Included are activity analysis and the use of scholarly research to support occupation-based intervention. Students complete the course *Psychosocial OT/Mental Health* to gain a solid foundation in the OT process when used to identify and address the needs of persons with mental health dysfunction as well develop an understanding of the approaches for targeting psychosocial needs of all humans across the lifespan. As with all semesters within the OTA program, students begin immediately applying both the philosophical concepts within the program's adult learning model and the organizing concepts that explain occupational performance and occupational therapy through *Level I Fieldwork A*. The Level I Fieldwork A course has an emphasis on psychosocial dysfunction across the life span requiring students to demonstrate increasing complexity of understanding of client interaction and documentation

Students then progress to the *Physical Dysfunction* course which builds professionally on the knowledge of human function by exploring how pathophysiology affects human function and, subsequently, how it can then be impacted. That same semester, students acquire skills in learning how to select and apply appropriate occupation-based and component-based interventions in the *Therapeutic Interventions* course (e.g., handling and transfer skills and use of ADLs). *Level I Fieldwork B* has an emphasis on the physical dysfunction domain and also builds on the introductory Level I Fieldwork A course. Students continue to build on prior coursework with the *Therapeutic Activities II* course to address increasingly complex activity analysis skills and an increased use of scholarly research as a basis for occupation-based intervention. During this semester, professional development and management are reinforced in the *Management in OT* course in preparation for Level II Fieldwork with focus on OT/OTA roles, supervision, strategic planning, ethics, and credentialing.

Although introduced in prior coursework, pediatrics is revisited during the summer semester within the program. The summer coursework places emphasis on more specific pediatric occupational therapy practice in both theory and Level I Fieldwork. The *Pediatrics in OT* and *Level I Fieldwork C* courses are designed to increase the development of knowledge and skill in treating children by addressing therapeutic areas such as child development, sensory processing, learning and attention, self-care, and socialization with attention to pediatric occupation in context and environment. During the summer, students complete a final course targeted at patient handling, *Special Procedures in Occupational Therapy*, to refine specialized skills such as those for neurodevelopmental patient handling and the use of modalities as interventions.

In the final semester of the program, students complete two eight-week fieldwork courses to integrate and cement all prior learning. While completing these fieldwork courses, students also complete their education in professional development and prepare for a professional role through the online *Professional Issues in Occupational Therapy* class. The information presented in this course is a review of previously presented information that emphasizes the development of the student portfolio and allows the student to more fully prepare for the practice exam and licensure.

## **Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

1. Provide occupation-based, client-centered care that is inclusive of consumer values, beliefs and needs. [Occupation and the Occupational Therapy Process]
2. Promote health and wellbeing for individuals and populations through the use of occupation. [Occupation and the Occupational Therapy Process; Diversity Factors in Practice]
3. Apply occupational therapy interventions based on current occupational therapy principles and best practices. [Occupation and the Occupational Therapy Process; Professionalism and Ethics, Professional Critical Thinking and Reasoning]
4. Clarify and uphold the ethics, attitudes and values of the profession. [Professionalism and Ethics; Community Engagement and Leadership]
5. Recognize social, economic and political factors that influence and change occupational therapy services and healthcare. [All Curricular Themes]
6. Interact professionally with consumers, caregivers, families and/or professional colleagues to achieve service objectives. [Occupational Therapy and the Occupational Therapy Process; Professionalism and Ethics]
7. Implement innovative strategies in the provision of services to individuals and populations within the community. [Occupation and the Occupational Therapy Process; Diversity Factors in Life and in Practice]
8. Demonstrate effective leadership actions within community and within the profession. [Community Engagement and Leadership; Professionalism and Ethics]

## Pre-requisites, Content, and Sequence

Course Name	Credit Hours
<b>Pre-requisites</b>	
Composition I	3
College Algebra	3
Anatomy & Physiology I	4
Student Success for MED	1
Intro to OTA	3
Developmental Psychology	3
Medical Terminology	3
Anatomy and Physiology II	4
Micro-Computer Applications	3
Sociology	3
	30
<b>(Enter into OTA program)</b>	
<b>Program--First Semester</b>	
Therapeutic Activities I	4
Pathophysiology	3
Level I Fieldwork A (Psychosocial OT)	1
Psychosocial OT/Mental Health	3
Human Movement in OT	4
<b>Program--Second Semester</b>	
Therapeutic Interventions	5
Physical Dysfunction	3
Level I Fieldwork B (Phys Dys)	1
Therapeutic Activities II	4
Management in OT	3
<b>Program--Third Semester</b>	
Pediatrics in OT	3
Level I Fieldwork C (Pediatrics)	1
Special Procedures in OT	2
<b>Program--Fourth Semester</b>	
Level II Fieldwork A	4
Level II Fieldwork B	4
Professional Issues in OT	2
	47

\*\*Students will NOT be allowed to participate in Level II Fieldwork until all pre-requisite and in-class program courses have been completed with a "C" or better.



# Occupational Therapy Assistant Core Courses

## **Pre-requisites**

General education pre-requisite courses

## Introduction to Occupational Therapy Assistant

### **3 Credit Hours**

This course introduces occupational therapy including the historical development and philosophy. Topics include occupations in work, self-care, and play/leisure throughout the life span; education and function; occupational therapy personnel; current and emerging practice areas; national and state credentialing requirements; and Occupational Therapy Framework, Standards of Practice, and Code of Ethics. It will also introduce professional literature as related to professional research and evidenced-based practice.

## **Program First Semester**

## Therapeutic Activity I

### **4 Credit Hours**

This course will focus on various activities used as therapeutic interventions in occupational therapy with emphasis on awareness of activity demands, contexts, adapting, grading, and safe implementation of activities.

## Pathophysiology in OT

### **3 Credit Hours**

This course is the study of etiology, symptomatology, and management of diseases and injuries across the lifespan encountered in occupational therapy treatment settings. Topics include the effects of trauma, disease, and congenital conditions on the physical and psychological domains of occupational behavior. General occupational therapy intervention strategies will be explored as well.

## Psychosocial/Mental Health in OT

### **3 Credit Hours**

This course will examine the occupational therapy process in relation to individuals with psychosocial challenges. Topics include assessment/evaluation tools and techniques, frames of reference, group processes and group dynamics, psychiatric diagnosis based on the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, effective documentation skills, and intervention strategies specific to this population.

## Psychosocial/Mental Health Level I Fieldwork A

### **1 Credit Hour**

This course is a health-related work-based learning experience that enables the student to begin to apply specialized occupational therapy theory, skills, and concepts in settings serving individuals with psychosocial challenges. Students are supervised by clinical educators or faculty at health care, education, or community settings.

### Human Movement in OT

#### **4 Credit Hours**

The study of musculoskeletal anatomy, posture and movement of the human body and the analysis of movement based on anatomical and mechanical principles in the context of occupational performance. Emphasis is on the elements of body function (sensory, neuromuscular, psychological, respiratory, and cardiovascular) and body structures (organs, skin, muscles, bones, limbs, and other anatomical features) during desired occupations as related to the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process, 3rd Edition (OTPF-3). Lab provides hands-on experience in study of human body function and body structures.

### **Program Second Semester**

### Therapeutic Activity II

#### **4 Credit Hours**

Continuation of Therapeutic Activities I. This course will focus on an intermediate level of activities used as therapeutic interventions in occupational therapy with emphasis on awareness of activity demands, contexts, adapting, grading, and safe implementation of activities. Students will be able to demonstrate appropriate techniques for planning, selecting, and implementing occupations or activities to meet the needs of specific populations; demonstrate facilitation of engagement in occupations to enhance occupational performance for various practice settings including emerging practice areas such as community wellness and occupational health.

### Therapeutic Interventions

#### **5 Credit Hours**

In this course, students will study principles of Occupational Therapy, assessments in Occupational Therapy, and development of treatment intervention strategies for Occupational Therapy clients. They will get hands-on lab experience to integrate “learning by doing” of techniques. Emphasis is on the Occupational Therapy Assistant’s role in the OT process including assessment, treatment intervention, and d/c from therapy services.

### Physical Dysfunction in OT

#### **3 Credit Hours**

Students in this course will study physical dysfunction and how it affects the occupational and psychosocial performance of the adult and geriatric population, and an introduction of how physical dysfunction, occupational and psychosocial performances affect the pediatric and adolescent population. Critical thinking for the identification of client problem list, goals, and interventions are encouraged through the examination of case studies with a variety of diagnosis and populations.

### Physical Dysfunction Level I Fieldwork B

#### **1 Credit Hour**

This course is a health-related work-based learning experience that enables the student to advance their ability to apply specialized occupational theory, skills, and concepts in settings serving adults with physical challenges. Students are supervised by clinical educators or faculty at health care, education, or community settings.

### Management in OT

#### **3 Credit Hours**

This course will examine basic management skills and explore the role of the occupational therapy assistant in health care delivery. Topics include ethical principles in the workplace, health care team role delineation, documentation, funding and reimbursement systems, and management in a variety of situations and using scholarly research to support decision making.

## **Program Third Semester**

### Pediatrics in OT

#### **3 Credit Hours**

This course is the study of human development from birth through adolescence with emphasis on occupational performance. Topics include frames of reference, assessment/evaluation tools and techniques, theory and application, and intervention strategies specific to this population.

### Pediatric Level I Fieldwork C

#### **1 Credit Hour**

This course is a health-related work-based learning experience that enables the student to apply specialized occupational theory, skills, and concepts in settings serving children or adolescents with developmental challenges. Students are supervised by clinical educators or faculty at health care, education, or community settings.

### Special Procedures in Occupational Therapy

#### **2 Credit Hours**

This course focuses on the function of the nervous system, including normal motor development, motor control, and motor learning through the lifespan. It also addresses the occupational therapy management of neurological diseases/conditions. Also addressed are the guidance practices for students for other special procedures utilized as interventions including the effective use of superficial biophysical agents, including indications, applications/techniques, precautions, and contraindications. Students will gain an understanding of the implementation of retrograde massage as a modality.

## **Program Fourth Semester**

### Level II Fieldwork (A)

#### **4 Credit Hours**

A minimum of 8 weeks of supervised work-based experience applying occupational therapy theory, skills, and concepts to direct patient/client care, generally at a clinical site. Students will apply the occupational therapy process with reference to the current Occupational Therapy Framework while developing and practicing the skills of an entry-level OTA. Clinical experiences are unpaid external learning experiences. This is the first of two capstone experiences which provide an opportunity for students to apply learning from all previous coursework.

Level II Fieldwork (B)

**4 Credit Hours**

A minimum of 8 weeks of supervised work-based clinical experience applying occupational therapy theory, skills, and concepts to direct patient/client care, generally at clinical site. Students will apply the occupational therapy process with reference to the *OTPF Domains and Process, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* while developing and practicing the skills of an entry-level OTA. Clinical experiences are unpaid external learning experiences. This is the first of two capstone experiences which provide an opportunity for students to apply all previous coursework

Professional Issues in OT

**2 Credit Hours**

This online course is designed to complement Level II fieldwork by creating a discussion forum addressing events, skills and knowledge related to the practice environment. The role of agencies and associations that support and regulate occupational therapy practice will also be examined. Topics include licensure and certifications, test-taking strategies for certification exams, and development of a professional portfolio.

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## Accreditation Status

Occupational Therapy Assistant Educational programs across the United States are accredited by ACOTE (The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education). All programs must meet the *Standards for an Accredited Education Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant* (adopted Dec. 98, revised 2007, 2011, and 2018) as set forth by ACOTE.

The OTA program at UA Cossatot 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 20814-6519. ACOTE can be reached by phone at (301) 652-AOTA. Upon completion of the OTA program, graduates will be eligible to sit for the National Certification Examination for the Occupational Therapy Assistant administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). All states (including Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana) require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually granted based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Note that a felony conviction or other background information may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination and/or attain state licensure. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they are aware of the effects of these circumstances.

It is the program's responsibility to maintain compliance with all ACOTE accreditation standards. In order to ensure compliance with these standards, the OTA Program is committed to each of the following:

- Inform ACOTE of the transfer of program sponsorship or change of the institution's name within 30 days of the transfer or change.
- Inform ACOTE within 30 days of the date of notification of any adverse accreditation action taken to change the sponsoring institution's accreditation status to probation or withdrawal of accreditation.
- Notify and receive ACOTE approval for any significant program changes prior to the admission of students into the new/changed program.
- Inform ACOTE within 30 days of the resignation of the program director or appointment of a new or interim program director.
- Pay accreditation fees within 90 days of the invoice date.
- Submit a Report of Self-Study and other required reports (e.g., Interim Report, Plan of Correction, Progress Report) within the period of time designated by ACOTE. All reports must be complete and contain all requested information.
- Agree to a site visit date before the end of the period for which accreditation was previously awarded.
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity in all interactions with ACOTE.

## Professional Organizations

*American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (AOTA)*  
7501 Wisconsin Ave, Suite 510E  
Bethesda, Maryland 20824-6519  
(301) 652-AOTA (2682)  
[www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org)

*Arkansas Occupational Therapy Association (ArOTA)*  
P.O. Box 10674  
Conway, AR 72034  
Email [office@arota.org](mailto:office@arota.org)  
[www.arota.org](http://www.arota.org)

*Arkansas State Medical Board*  
1401 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 340  
Little rock, AR 72201-2936  
(501) 296-1978  
[www.armedicalboard.org](http://www.armedicalboard.org)

*Texas Occupational Therapy Association*  
P.O. Box 15576  
Austin, TX 78761-5576  
(512) 454-8682  
[www.tota.org](http://www.tota.org)

*Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners (TBOTE)*  
333 Guadalupe, Suite 2-510  
Austin, Texas 78701-3942  
(512) 305-6900  
<http://www.ptot.texas.gov/page/occupationaltherapy>

*Oklahoma Occupational Therapy Association (OKOTA)*  
P.O. Box 2602  
Oklahoma City, OK 73101-2602  
(405) 205-3942  
[www.okota.org](http://www.okota.org)

*Oklahoma State Medical Board*  
101 NE 51<sup>st</sup> Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
(405) 962-1400  
[http://www.okmedicalboard.org/occupational\\_therapists](http://www.okmedicalboard.org/occupational_therapists)

*Louisiana Occupational Therapy Association (LOTA)*

P.O. Box 14806

Baton Rouge, LA 70898

(225) 291-2806

<http://www.lota.camp9.org/>

*Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners*

P.O. box 30250

New Orleans, LA 70190-0250

(504) 568-6820

<http://www.lsbme.la.gov/>

*National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT)*

800 S. Frederick Avenue-Suite 200

Gaithersburg, MD 20877-4150

(301) 990-7979

[www.nbcot.org](http://www.nbcot.org)

[infor@nbcot.org](mailto:infor@nbcot.org)

*Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA)*

The Student Occupational Therapy Association is a UA Cossatot sanctioned club for OTA students. The Association's primary purpose is to promote the OTA program and Occupational Therapy through community involvement and community service projects. Membership fees are \$15.00 per year and are due in the first fall semester.

## **References**

In effort to avoid conflict of interest in reporting employment rates, program faculty will not provide references for employment.

## Credentialing

There are two types of credentialing that apply to Occupational Therapy Assistants (certification and licensure). In general, OTAs are certified nationally (as COTAs) through the completion of a national board exam. Once the board exam is completed, a COTA is licensed by each individual state in which they wish to work. Both are required to be employed.

### *Certification (NBCOT)*

Certification is the process that occurs after completion of the OTA educational program at UA Cossatot when individuals are granted the Associate of Applied Science. It is important to recognize that completion of the degree program does not, in itself, allow an individual to practice OT. In order to become initially certified, an individual must successfully complete an accredited OTA program of study including Level II Fieldwork. This then allows the individual to sit for boards through the certification examination for occupational therapy assistants. If the certification examination is successfully passed, the individual is considered *certified* by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy and may call themselves a COTA. They can then apply to be licensed in the state(s) of their choice.

### *Licensure (state)*

All 4 of the regional states require a license to practice OT in that state. Licensure is the governmental (state) regulation to practice, designed to protect the health and welfare of the citizens of a state. Failure to become (and remain) licensed by the state renders both the individual and the employer liable for legal charges and monetary fines. Each state maintains rules and regulations that govern eligibility for a license, as well as requirements for licensure renewal. Upon successful completion of the certification exam you are eligible to apply for licensure. Note that between the time of receiving your OTA Associates Degree and taking the NBCOT exam some states will provide for a temporary license. This is usually granted for a limited amount of time and has specific supervision requirements. See each state board for more details for the particular requirements that apply to that state. An individual must obtain a temporary or regular state license *following* certification and *prior* to practicing.

Note that a felony conviction or other background information may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination and/or attain state licensure. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they are aware of the effects of these circumstances.

*ACOTE® accredited occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant educational programs satisfy the states' educational requirements in all states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Students graduating from an ACOTE® accredited occupational therapy and occupational therapy*



assistant educational program are eligible to take the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) certification exam and apply for licensure in all states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. For more information regarding state qualifications and licensure requirements, please refer to the [AOTA State Licensure](#) webpage.

## A Note About OT License Compact

The OT Compact is a joint initiative of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT®). The OT Compact Commission (OTCC) is an active governing body. The Commission is developing the necessary interstate licensure data system that will allow for rapid verification of practitioners' good standing among member states. We anticipate that the Compact will be operational (accepting applications) sometime in 2025.

The Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact (OT Compact) is an interstate compact, or formal agreement among states, that facilitates interstate practice of occupational therapy.

Under the OT Compact, Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs) who are licensed in good standing in a Compact member state will be eligible to practice in other Compact member states via a "compact privilege," which is equivalent to a license. The OTCC is not yet issuing compact privileges to practice. Throughout 2024, the Commission is working with developers to create the necessary data system to receive applications, provide interstate data communications, and issue privileges to practice. It is anticipated that the OTCC will begin issuing compact privileges to practice in 2025. The OT Compact is enacted in some states, meaning those states have passed legislation to be part of the compact. However, the OT Compact is *not yet operationalized*, meaning the process to apply for and receive compact privileges is in the works and will be available in 2025.

For more information, please visit: <https://otcompact.org/>

## **Note to All Students**

UA Cossatot faculty reserves the right to alter the tuition/fees, curriculum, syllabus, student handbook, program policies, or admission policies whenever change is deemed necessary. Students will be notified of any changes through Blackboard or the UA Cossatot website.

Additionally:

The OTA program is very intense and requires approximately 30-36 hours per week of theory/lab/fieldwork/service learning. This does not include prep or study time. The credit hours ascribed to each semester while in the OTA Program are considered by the College to be full-time. The final semester prior to graduation is considered a full-time (40-hour week) fieldwork clinical apprenticeship.

Due to the strenuous nature of the program, students are recommended strongly to not seek outside employment. To do so would limit their ability for successful progression through their courses and/or the OTA program.

## **Student Outside Coursework**

Students are advised that the Occupation Therapy Assistant Program (OTA) is strenuous in nature. Students are therefore not allowed to take additional course work that is not directly related to their degree plan while in the OTA Program. A student entering the program will have a course load of 15 credit hours during the first fall, 16 credit hours in the spring, 6 credit hours in the summer and 10 during the last fall semester. The OTA program is very intense and requires approximately 30-36 hours per week of theory/lab/fieldwork/service learning. This does not include prep or study time. The hours ascribed to each semester while in the OTA Program are considered by the College to be full-time.

## **Advisory Council**

The UA Cossatot Occupational Therapy Assistant Advisory Council includes Occupational Therapists, Occupational Therapy Assistants, Therapy Directors, Therapy Owners, and UA Cossatot OTA Program faculty. The purpose of the council is to review and advise on curriculum, fieldwork experiences/opportunities, best practices, and recommendations for modification to best support the

educational needs of our students with consideration for evidence-based practice. The Academic Advisory Council was formed in December of 2013, prior to the matriculation of students, in efforts to best plan for the arrival of students in a new program.

## **Program Lockers/Cubbies**

Locker cubbies will be made available for Program students use (at no charge to the students) so that they may store course supplies and personal items necessary for use while in the Program. Students' personal belongings (i.e. cell phones, excess bags, etc.) will not be permitted into classrooms or laboratories for safety, prevention of theft, and professional environment. As the cubbies are not secure, no valuables should be left. Valuables should be locked in the student's vehicle when not in use.

Students are responsible for keeping the locker in good condition; no mirrors, adhesive, or decorative items may be used. Food, drinks, alcohol, drugs, tobacco products or paraphernalia will not be allowed in the lockers at any time. All lockers are the property of the College and, at any time, College representatives may search lockers to assure the safety of the institution. A student need not be present when his/her locker is being searched. Lockers may not store any items that are not permissible on campus as outlined in the College Catalog. Any illegal or unauthorized items in the locker, or any other items reasonably determined to be of a potential threat to the safety or security of others, may be seized by campus security.

Students will clear all of their belongings from lockers at the end of the summer term. Any item not cleared from lockers by the designated time will be disposed of or will become the property of the institution.

## Academic Admissions and Advising

The UA Cossatot Division of Medical Education has a full-time academic advisor (AA). The AA is responsible for helping students apply for admission to the college and guiding the student through a self-assessment process and exploring his/her academic goals. The AA assists students with establishing a degree plan, schedule planning, and recommendation of appropriate course work for each individual student. This includes assisting students who may need preparatory course work prior to taking pre-requisites in the medical program selected. The AA ensures each student is on schedule with pre-requisite course work, meeting appropriate application deadlines, and make referrals to other college resources available to the student. These include but are not limited to instructor communication, tutoring, library resources, counseling, and medical resources.

## OTA Program Advising

Once a student is admitted into the OTA program, the Medical Education AA, OTA Program Director, and OTA faculty work in collaboration with the student to ensure the student is making academic progress and appropriate progress through the program. Once in the program, students are assigned an OTA faculty advisor. The OTA Program Director, AFWC, or other faculty may be assigned as their OTA advisor. Students meet with their OTA advisor (at least once a semester-more as needed) to monitor progress in class and progression through the program. It is the *student's responsibility* to ensure that difficulties are conveyed to the program staff when they occur.

Students have routine access to grades through Blackboard. Grades are posted regularly and in a timely manner to allow students to monitor academic standing. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of current grades and make adjustments in learning behaviors to ensure improvements as needed. To facilitate students understanding of grades and to facilitate improved success, grades are assessed approximately every month by the instructor. Any non-passing course grades at that time are reviewed by the advisor or Program Director and an action plan created as needed.

Students who are not progressing as expected will have an action plan established for remediation. This plan discusses the program outcomes, solutions/goals, rationales, and a timeline for the action plan. Students are also referred to Academic and Disability Support Services for referrals as needed.

Students meet (via face to face, phone, email, or virtual methods) when needed with the Medical Education AA to plan and be registered for the next semester's course work. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and clear any "hold" status that would prevent them from being registered for the upcoming semester(s).

While completing Level II Fieldwork and the online Professional Issues course, students are required to “meet” with the instructor or Program Director at least once at mid semester to ensure progression through the fieldwork rotations and to provide support as needed. This meeting can be completed in person or via Skype, Facetime, Zoom, Ring Central, Blackboard Collaborate or other meeting forum and can be completed when necessary by phone.

## **Chain of Command and Problem Handling**

If a student has a problem while in the OTA Program they should follow the chain of command until the problem is resolved. Students should attempt to resolve the problem with the individual or instructor first, and then follow the chain of command listed below:

- 1) Course Instructor/AFWC (Fieldwork related – Arwen McDaniel)
- 2) OTA Program Director - Tamla Heminger
- 3) Division Chair – Kimberly Dickerson
- 4) Vice Chancellor for Academics – Ashley Aylett
- 5) Chancellor – Steve Cole

If the student has a complaint against a course instructor, it is acceptable to proceed to the next contact in the chain of command. Students have the right to grieve actions by employees or other students as outlined in the UAC Academic Catalog, Student Grievance Procedures: Non-Grade Issues. Students, additionally, have the right to appeal grades per the grade appeal process outlined in this handbook and the UAC Academic Catalog.

## **Courtesy**

As a measure of professionalism and respect, students should address UA Cossatot faculty and administration, instructors, guest speakers, and fieldwork/clinical supervisors as Ms., Mr., Mrs., Doctor, or Professor as is appropriate for their earned and established credentials. Nicknames or first names are not to be used. Endearing terms such as “honey, sweetie, etc.” are not appropriate.

When contacting each of the above identified professionals, using a professional dialog with email, text, and conversation that demonstrates professionalism and respect inherent to higher learning and medical professionals is expected. Texting should be avoided in favor on telephoning and email.

Students should always be aware of time of day when contacting the instructor, fieldwork supervisor, AFWC, or the Program Director, particularly by phone or text. Only in the event of emergency should contact occur prior to 7:00 am or after 8:00 pm. Failure to follow basic courtesy in communication will result in counseling for lack of professionalism.

## **Educational Resource Center / Library**

The UA Cossatot Educational Resource Center (ERC) is a fully functioning, media-rich, user-friendly resource center striving to enrich the lives of students through active learning. The ERC works with faculty to promote higher education and helps students achieve their maximum academic potential. An Educational Resource Center is located on each UA Cossatot campus with knowledgeable staff available to assist students during hours of operation. Free tutoring is available, along with several computer stations, and a lounging area with comfortable seating. The ERC offers about 10,000 titles in book and media format, as well as numerous online databases. Students may access databases at any time, after acquiring a student identification card. The ERC also handles all textbook rentals. Information regarding the Educational Resource Center can be accessed directly from the College website.

Students are required to utilize the ERC for portions of their academic preparation. Each course will designate on their syllabus a required number of hours to be completed in the ERC prior to the completion of examinations and/or assignments. A sign in sheet is available in the ERC. It is the student's responsibility to ensure time and records are complete. Any required time not completed prior to the submission of an assignment or exam, will result in a 10% reduction in the exam/assignment grade. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with hours and to ensure hours have been recorded appropriately.

## **Program Reference Materials**

Program reference materials will be maintained in the classroom/lab. These materials must be signed out with Program faculty or staff and must remain on campus at all times. In the event that reference materials are damaged, lost, or stolen, the student's account will be charged for replacement(s).

## **Personal Property**

Students are advised to secure their valuables at all times in their vehicles. The college and the Program do not accept responsibility for damage or loss of personal property.

## **Professional Liability Insurance**

Professional liability insurance is provided by the college and is included in the student tuition and fees. Program students are covered with \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 aggregate.

## **Health Insurance**

The college does not provide student health services on any of the campuses. Student health insurance is not required by the Program but is highly recommended. Health insurance will not be provided by UAC. Students will be responsible for the selection and premiums of their own health insurance policy, if they so choose.

## **Immunizations**

Program students are required to meet Medical Education immunization requirements communicated on the Program webpage. Additional vaccines and/or tests may be required per clinical facility guidelines of which all expenses will be covered by the student. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with all required immunizations deemed necessary by state, college, and fieldwork facility requirements. Any immunizations not maintained by the required deadline will result in the student not being allowed to attend class or fieldwork and may result in removal from the Program.

## **Financial Aid**

Financial aid may be made available through federal programs, state programs, or scholarship opportunities. Please refer to the College website for contact information.

## **Potential Health Risks**

It is imperative that students understand that they may encounter potential health risks due to the nature of the healthcare field. The risk for exposure to infections, viruses, and diseases is possible in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical rotation. Lab protocols and low student-to-faculty ratios are in place to minimize these risks. Routine cleaning is used to minimize exposure in the classroom and laboratory settings. Students are instructed in the use of standard precautions and handwashing as their first line of defense. It is possible that students will be exposed to infected blood-borne pathogens, bodily fluids, needle sticks, and/or inhalation of microorganisms. Students are educated about their individual responsibility to maintain safe practices.

In case of an exposure, the student will immediately report to the clinical instructor any incident of exposure. The student and clinical instructor are responsible for notifying the AFWC by email and the facility infection control coordinator. Specific recommendations will be made by infection control according to the type of exposure and infectious agent involved. A record of the incident will be maintained with the student files.

## **Hazardous Materials**

The storage of hazardous materials will be consistent with OSHA requirements. Standard OSHA workplace inspections will occur as part of the UAC campus policies. An MSDS manual will be maintained and stored in a cabinet in the PD office.

## **Accident and Illness**

Accidents occurring during theory, labs, fieldwork, conferences, or other scheduled activities must be reported immediately to the instructor. In the event a student requires medical attention, the student will be responsible for all charges incurred. If the student is ill and unable to attend class, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor and the student will be held to the absence policy of the Program. It is expected that students will not attend class and/or clinical if they have fever of 100.4 or higher or are vomiting.

UA Cossatot also provides a \$10,000 student accident policy. In the event of an accident during a college-sponsored activity, students will be covered up to \$10,000 according to the provisions of the policy. Please note this is a secondary policy and any insurance coverage a student has in place will be considered the primary insurance. UAC files claims on behalf of the student but cannot guarantee payment or claims will be approved. For further information, please contact the Human Resources office at 870-584-1104. All students are encouraged to carry medical and/or accidental insurance but it is not required.

## **Emergency Procedures**

In the event of an emergency on campus, students are advised to report the emergency to a faculty member or college staff. If another student is present, send the other student to make the appropriate notification. If appropriate, call for medical assistance, assess vital signs, and begin CPR if appropriate. A first aid kit is located at the Ashdown campus front desk and an automated external defibrillator (AED) is located on the wall across from the front desk. Additional emergency kits are available in labeled containers around the campus. In an off-campus emergency, the clinical instructor will assist the student to emergency services when in a hospital setting or notify 911 for all other facilities. Students will be responsible for any charges incurred for emergency care and treatment. Emergency information and evacuation routes are posted in each room.



## **Confidentiality**

The Program will maintain student privacy and confidentiality as required by federal regulations. Student academic records may not be discussed with others without a signed release.

Grades will be posted in Blackboard, which is password protected for each individual student. Feedback for student grades will be provided in a manner consistent with maintaining confidentiality. If discussion regarding grades is necessary, the instructor and student will meet privately. Clinical instructors must also maintain student confidentiality; student skills, patient interactions, progress, or lack of progress may not be discussed with others except for the student, AFWC, and/or Program director.

Students must also maintain confidentiality of patients during all clinical education experiences. All patient/client information is completely confidential. Any breach of patient/client confidentiality will result in immediate dismissal from the Program and may be punishable in a court of law. Students are instructed in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) at which time they will learn the proper use and handling of confidential patient information. HIPAA guidelines are clear and must be strictly followed. Students must not discuss patient/client information with anyone except clinical instructors and only those directly involved in the patient/client's care. Students may only access information pertaining to patient/client's assigned to them, while in the clinical setting and/or when accessing electronic simulated charting.

## **Recording & Photography**

The Program does not allow audio or video recording of instructors, by students, at any time. In the event an instructor desires any type of recording, another Program faculty will assist. A student will be subject to disciplinary actions if caught recording an instructor without expressed permission. Simulated patient scenarios will occur during classroom and/or laboratory. During this time, students may be video recorded or have still pictures taken, for grading and/or educational purposes. Students may be assigned projects to capture still images, video recording, or audio recording of classmates for simulated patient scenarios, treatment interventions, and/or educational training material. Patient/client interactions may not be recorded without the expressed and written consent of the facility and patient. Images or video recordings are not to be posted by students on social media sites. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

## **Social Media**

Due to the high standards placed on those in the medical profession, including programs of study, this policy applies to the UA Cossatot Medical Education Division regarding any written, electronic communication published online regarding program-related matters that students would not otherwise be

privity to unless admitted to a medical education program. Confidentiality of students, faculty, staff, and clinical clients is to be maintained at all times. Client information or clinical situations should never be discussed on social networking sites. The use of/posting of unauthorized (where written permission has not been obtained from involved parties) pictures, logos, videos or UA Cossatot MED materials is strictly prohibited. Students shall not use online social networking to harass, threaten, or discriminate against other students, faculty, staff or any member of the public. Text, photos, emails, or videos that are demeaning, belittling or insulting to faculty, staff, or students or are lewd, offensive, and/or unprofessional may not be used/posted. Personal information about students, faculty, staff, and clinical sites will not be shared on networking sites without written permission from all involved parties. Violation of any online social network policy will result in disciplinary action which may result in dismissal from the Program.

## **Informed Consent**

Students are educated throughout the Program of the patient's right to refuse participation in any component of clinical education. Informed consent must be provided with patient interactions. Students are instructed to, and are required to, identify themselves as an "Occupational Therapy Assistant Student" upon each encounter with patients.

## **Waiver of Liability**

Program students understand that participation in laboratory, classroom, and on and off-campus activities carries certain risks that cannot be eliminated regardless of the care taken to avoid injuries. The specific risks vary from one activity to another and may include, but are not limited to, minor injuries such as scratches, bruises, and sprains; major injuries such as eye injury or loss of sight, joint or back injuries, heart attacks, and concussions; and catastrophic injuries including paralysis or death. The college and the Program will not be held responsible in the event of injury or death. Students participating in the Program assume any risks involved.

## Distance Learning

Coursework throughout the UA Cossatot OTA Program is completed in many different formats. This allows for a very diversified learning experience for students meeting the needs of adult learners. In addition to formal in-class course and lab settings, educational experiences will occur using simulation lab activities, virtual learning experiences, service learning projects, community service projects, onsite Level I and Level II Fieldwork, workshops, and fieldtrips. All courses in the OTA Program use the Blackboard Learning Management System as an enhancement for course delivery. Additionally, online distance learning utilizing Blackboard is utilized in two courses.

### Specific Use:

First, the Introduction to OTA course is available in both a traditional in-class hybrid format as well as offered online through Blackboard. Utilizing this format is optional for students based on their educational needs. Distance learning is also utilized during the final semester of the program. While completing Level II Fieldwork, OTA program students will be enrolled in OTA 24042 Professional Issues in Occupational Therapy Online.

In this final semester of the program, students complete two eight-week fieldwork courses to integrate and cement all prior learning. While completing these fieldwork courses, students will complete their education in professional development and prepare for the transition to a professional role through the online *Professional Issues* class. The information presented in this course is a review of previously presented information that emphasizes the development of the student portfolio and allows the student to more fully prepare for the practice exam and licensure. Coursework is completed weekly through Blackboard and culminates with an in-person presentation of their portfolio as their final assignment in the course.

For distance learning courses, college policy is followed to ensure that the student who is enrolled in the course (and getting credit for its completion) is the student completing the work. UA Cossatot policy states:

All online courses taken thru UA Cossatot require students who live within 60 miles of a UA campus to take at least one proctored exam on that UA Cossatot campus. Those living outside of the 60-mile radius must secure suitable exam proctors in the area or utilize a campus approved proctoring service.

All exams in the Introduction to OTA course (in-class and online) are taken in the Testing Center on campus or taken through the monitoring service Proctor U or Respondus. Additional measures in this course: students are required to complete a video presentation as part of group assignment.

For the Professional Issues Course, students are required to complete at least one web-based or in-person conference with the instructor during the semester. During this session students are challenged with specific online learning questions from the program and course. In the past, video conferencing has

occurred through FaceTime, Blackboard Collaborate, Zoom, Ring Central, Skype, and Google Hangouts. Additional measures in this course: students are required to complete their final portfolio presentation in-person on campus as their final assignment in the course.

## **Student Academic Integrity**

The Program adheres to UAC academic integrity policies. Please refer to the UAC Academic Catalog for additional information on these policies.

Academic Integrity is defined as: a commitment to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Academic dishonesty includes any act that gives an unfair advantage or is damaging to the reputation or performance of the academic community.

Such acts may include, but are not limited to:

- Theft of or unauthorized access to an exam, answer key or other graded work from previous course offerings.
- Copying answers, data, or other information (or allowing others to do so) during an examination, quiz, laboratory experiment, homework, classwork, or any other academic exercise in which the student is not expressly permitted to work jointly with others.
- Using any device, implement, or other form of study aid during an examination, quiz, laboratory experiment, or any other academic exercise without the faculty member's permission.
- Use of an alternate, stand-in or proxy during an examination.
- Copying from the examination or work of another person or source.
- Submission or use of falsified data.
- Using false statements to obtain additional time or other accommodation.
- Unauthorized Collaboration / Collusion
- Misrepresenting facts (e.g., providing false information to postpone an exam, obtain an extended deadline for an assignment, or even gain an unearned financial benefit)
- Begging
- Multiple submissions—submitting essentially the same written assignment for two courses without authorization or multiple times in one course
- Falsifying or inventing any information, citation, or data; involvement in actions unbecoming to students in good standing or potentially damaging to the College reputation or that of the members of its academic community of students and scholars.
- Unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI)—See use policy on course syllabi
- Any other acts (or attempted acts) that violate the basic standard of academic integrity

## Student Services

Student Support Services are available on all campuses. Academic (learning centers/testing centers), disability support services, and financial aid resources are located within the division of student services. Resources for each are also located on each satellite campus and are available by mail, email, virtual, and on the UA Cossatot website.

UA Cossatot Academic Counseling and Disability Support Services are dedicated to the academic and personal success of all students. The counselor will work with any student to recognize opportunities to grow and learn, identify any barriers to academic and/or personal success, and develop action and/or accommodation plans to overcome those barriers. The counselor has an open-door policy. All students are welcome, and discussion will be confidential. For additional information, see the current academic catalog on Disability Support Services, or to print off forms, go to the UA Cossatot website: [www.cccua.edu](http://www.cccua.edu).

Communication for students is available through campus email, UA Cossatot website, Blackboard, and various other media resources such as Facebook, the radio, and local television. The UA Cossatot academic catalog, (which is available to all UA Cossatot students in print and online), and the OTA Student Handbook and Policy Manual outline UA Cossatot and the OTA Program's policies and procedures including substance abuse policy, grievance and appeals processes, student rights and responsibilities, grading, progression, and graduation requirements.

There are several opportunities for students to be involved in student activities on campus. A list of student organizations is listed in the UA Cossatot academic catalog and on the college website. OTA students participate in the Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) to help promote awareness and professionalism among students in the OTA program. During the first semester students will vote on office positions to facilitate suggestions or ideas related to the program, fundraising, and community service projects.

Students also have a voice on the discussion board in Blackboard, the college's online and enhanced learning platform. This allows students to post anonymous questions and receive answers to questions in a timely fashion. There are four different forums for the students to post including general discussion, clinical discussion, assignment discussion, and fundraising.

The disaster and safety committee have provided framed emergency procedure guides which are located in the classrooms on all three campuses.

## **Student Occupational Therapy Association**

The mission of the OTA Program at UA Cossatot is to prepare highly competent, entry-level occupational therapy assistant professionals who can skillfully contribute to the existing and future diverse communities they will serve.

The Mission of the SOTA Club, therefore, is to strive toward and support the program mission. Primarily, it is to promote community service among its students, as well as enhance communication, interaction and positive relationships between the OTA students at UA Cossatot and the community while ensuring students display a commitment to their educational duties and develop their skills and professionalism.

All UA Cossatot OTA Program students are required to be active members of the SOTA club and will be automatically enrolled into the club upon acceptance into the program. The club will charge 5.00 a semester (total of 15.00) dues from each student. Students' dues are utilized as seed money for fundraising and community service activities.

Membership in the club requires a minimum of 8 hours of community service activities be completed prior to the beginning of Level II Fieldwork. The Community Service Activity Log will be maintained by the AFWC in the student file. All activities must be approved by the PD or the AFWC prior to be entered on the student log. A minimum of two hours per student will be assigned in OTA areas of the building. Failure to complete required community service hours will delay the onset of Level II Fieldwork and will delay graduation. Students serving as officers can achieve one hour of community service for completion of their responsibilities in that role.

Please note that SOTA community service hours are *not* the same as Service-Learning Projects that are required of all students as part of specific courses.

## Discipline

If it is determined that a student has demonstrated inappropriate conduct or lack of professional behaviors, a program faculty member will meet with the student to discuss the incident and inform the student of the specific conduct that was deemed inappropriate. A written record of the event and meeting will be placed in the student's program file. If the student's conduct does not improve, the student will again meet with a program faculty member to review the incident and create a plan for improvement with a deadline for measurable improvement. A written record of the incident and action plan will be placed in the student's program file and a copy of the report will be provided to the student, program faculty, the Division Chair for Medical Education and/or the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. If the student does not demonstrate satisfactory improvement by the specified deadline, the student may be dismissed from the program.

Professional behaviors include (but are not limited to) any of the following:

- Sleeping in class/clinical
- Patient care error professional
- Dishonesty
- Failure to follow policies and procedures
- Disruptive behavior
- Carelessness
- Violation of safety rules
- Academic misconduct
- Failure to arrive prepared for clinical rotation
- Leaving clinical unit without permission
- Lack of respect, cooperation with peers, faculty, or hospital
- Failure to follow clinical appearance requirements
- Lack of interest
- Failure to maintain an attitude/behavior
- Unethical/illegal behavior
- Cell phone misuse
- Chronic tardy for class, lab, or clinical (3<sup>rd</sup> tardy)

The following is the disciplinary progression for violations of professional, ethical, or etiquette behaviors.

- 1<sup>st</sup> infraction: Written warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> infraction: Student sent home with hours deducted for the remainder of the day. Notice sent to Division Chair.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> infraction: 1-day suspension with hours deducted. Notice sent to Division Chair and Vice Chancellor.
- 4<sup>th</sup> infraction: Administrative withdrawal from program.

UA Cossatot reserves the right to require a student to immediately withdraw at any time for inefficiency, lack of progress, ill health, lack of professionalism, inability to demonstrate integration of learning, inability to demonstrate critical thinking or safety in clinical/lab settings, misconduct, neglect of duty, or nonconformity with regulations of the school and affiliating agencies (including absenteeism and tardiness).



## OTA Student Basic Professionalism, Ethics, and Etiquette

Students enrolled into the OTA program are expected to behave in ways that reflect high professional and ethical standards befitting medical education students. Professional behavior is expected in all settings. This includes any event or setting directly or non-directly related to your enrollment in the OTA program. Students' behavior, professionalism, and appearance are representative of themselves, UA Cossatot, and the Occupational Therapy Profession.

Students will begin to develop an understanding of professionalism and professional behaviors as well as ethics while in the Intro to OTA course and the Success Strategies for Medical Education courses and will continue to develop and demonstrate these skills throughout the OTA Program.

Although learning and developing advanced skills that would be expected of an entry-level clinician occurs throughout the program, the OTA program expects students to always adhere to the *basic* guidelines regarding professional and ethical behavior in the classroom as defined in the UA Cossatot Academic Catalog. Additionally, students will follow the professional and ethical expectation guidelines the OTA Program has further clarified below.

Students in the OTA program are expected to:

1. Follow the dress code, codes of conduct, and policies described in this manual and any additional requirements included in OTA course syllabi. "Acting in a manner counter to the principles detailed in any ethical code or student code of conduct that applies to you is unethical behavior." (Sladyk, 2005, p. 531) (See dress code policy in this Handbook).
2. Use their own knowledge and skill to write papers, analyze activities, compile research information, complete assignments, and complete examinations without referring to others' answers, class notes, or other references unless specifically permitted by the instructor. They shall not plagiarize, quote or copy other persons' works without giving proper recognition as stated in a standard manual on style. Recognize that submitting student's own previously submitted work is also considered plagiarism. Students who fail to comply with this standard can expect to receive a zero on the assignment and exam and may be subject to further disciplinary action including being reported to the Vice Chancellor of Academics and being removed from the program. (See Academic Integrity Policy in the UAC Academic Catalog and in this Handbook).
3. Recognize the definition of artificial intelligence (AI) for the OTA program. AI is defined as a tool that can assist with an activity or assignment or is a tool that can create an activity or assignment. In the educational setting, it is also a tool that collects information or does the work of humans, essentially making it a robot that attempts to produce work as a human might. Examples of easily identifiable AI are using spell check in Microsoft Word, an online thesaurus, citation generators, TurnItIn Draft Coach to show you areas for improvement in writing or citations, or even Grammarly

to learn how to improve your writing skills. The College's Academic Integrity Policy defines using unauthorized AI tools as cheating. However, authorized use of AI will not be considered cheating.

4. AI may be assessed through methods such as Turnitin, SafeAssign, other electronic plagiarism checkers, and instructor discretion through comparison with other student work.
5. In the instance of suspected unauthorized use of AI, the student will be counseled about the assignment. If it can be confirmed that the student has used AI without the appropriate permissions, the assignment will be classified as a cheating incident and handled according to the College's Academic Integrity Policy and will be documented as a violation of professional behaviors.
6. It is the student's responsibility to ensure understanding of the AI policy on an assignment prior to use.
7. Assume that each assignment completed in class or outside of class is to be done without consultation of another current or former class member unless specifically and clearly permitted by the instructor. If the student is unsure, it is the student's responsibility to clarify this with the instructor PRIOR to submitting the assignment.
8. Demonstrate respect to instructors and other learners.
  - They may not insult, slur, raise their voice to, or degrade instructors, other College employees, other health professionals or other students. This includes making any remarks verbally or written, or through electronic communication and social media that could be construed as such. (This expectation does not infringe upon a student's right to raise questions and request clarification but does define parameters in which the question or clarification is brought forth.)
  - Students will refrain from engaging in side conversations during class. The only discussion that should take place should be related to the lecture or lab content and should be kept to a minimum. Talking in the classroom keeps other students from listening to the instructor, causing them to miss valuable lecture content.
  - Frequent breaks are given, so students should leave the classroom for emergencies only. Students should return from breaks promptly. Students not returning from breaks in a timely manner will be subject to the attendance policy for tardiness/absence (see Tardiness and Attendance policies in this Handbook).
  - Avoid leaving the room during a guest speaker or classmate led presentation.

- Respect other student's projects. Students shall not handle, steal, alter, deface or otherwise harm another student's project, especially in a manner which might cause the student to earn a lower grade.
9. Students shall not smoke on any of the UA Cossatot campuses (this includes no smoking in any vehicle parked on campus property).
  10. Students will honor commitments by being on time for classes, field trips, and fieldwork duties. When students are not on time or are absent, they will follow the appropriate procedures. (Refer to attendance and absence notification and call-in policy procedures in this manual and in course syllabi).
  11. Respect the limited resources of furniture, fixtures, textbooks, computers, instructional technology, supplies, library books, and journals. Students shall not mutilate, deface, damage or withhold resources for their own use.
  12. Respect the status as being a representative of the College and the OTA Program by demonstrating respect and professional representation at all times including their presence on social media.
  13. Conserve limited resources by using only supplies needed for completion of assignments and maintain equipment in good working order. They shall not waste supplies or misuse equipment. It is the student's responsibility to report any damaged resources of any type to the OTA Program Director.
  14. Assist in maintaining class and laboratory rooms in good order. They shall not leave these rooms dirty, cluttered, littered or in disarray or disorder upon completion of their assignment in each room. Failure to do so will result in loss of building privileges for individual students and/or the entire class.
  15. All students are expected to pick up after themselves and maintain the kitchen space.
  16. Complete all assignments by the scheduled date and time.
  17. Comply with and act upon safety procedures when working with peers, patients and equipment whether in class, lab, clinic or the patient's home. Under no circumstance shall a student endanger the safety and welfare of patients, other students, faculty and staff.
  18. Comply with all policies and procedures established by the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program and all fieldwork facilities. This includes expectations outlined in each OTA course syllabus. They shall not exempt themselves without specific permission by a faculty member or fieldwork educator.
  19. Respect the confidentiality of patient information regardless of source (patient, therapist, records, and medical charts). They shall not repeat information outside of the classroom, clinic or facility in which

any part of the patient's name appears except initials. They will fully adhere to HIPAA Guidelines for Fieldwork as published by the American Occupational Therapy Association.

20. Respect the confidentiality of information shared in the classroom. All discussions held in the classroom, lab or fieldwork are to be considered confidential in nature. “Due to the nature of OT education, sometimes students and instructors have personal examples that are relevant to class discussions. This information should be respected and not used for gossip.”
21. Work in cooperation with and respect for peers and other healthcare team members. They shall contribute their fair share of group projects.
22. Respect the property and property rights of the OTA department and other medical education faculty and staff, all medical education students, fieldwork facility, and staff and patients. They shall not remove or borrow property without permission and shall not damage or misuse property while on UA Cossatot property, fieldwork facility, clinic or home.
23. Monitor and maintain current CPR and immunization status as required by the OTA program. Students will not be allowed to attend class, lab, field trips, or fieldwork without having immunizations and CPR that is current. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of expiration dates. (see immunization policy in this Handbook and the Med Education Document Manager)
24. Fully comply with instructions associated with fieldwork placements, including but not limited to, using appropriate professional verbal and written communication, contacting the fieldwork educator with **any** changes, completing student data sheets, site preference forms, etc.
25. Honor commitments made with peers, college faculty, staff, and fieldwork educators. This includes timely notification in advance when unable to keep a commitment.
26. Function within the role of a student. If you are unsure if certain actions are outside the role and scope of a student, ask before acting.
27. **Students are expected to check campus mail and blackboard daily during the semester and weekly during the semester breaks for administrative announcements.** Failure to respond appropriately to time-sensitive requests made by faculty and fieldwork educators will result in disciplinary action. Campus mail is the only electronic mail source that will be utilized by faculty and fieldwork educators.
28. Students are encouraged to participate in classroom discussion with the instructor, especially for clarification purposes. Discussion should remain professional; arguing and disruptive/nonprofessional behavior will not be tolerated.

29. Sleeping in class, virtual learning, lab, or clinical will not be tolerated. If the student is unable to stay awake during class/virtual learning/lab/fieldwork, the student will be asked to leave the area for the day and time will be subtracted from the student's sixty (60) hours.
30. Students are to remain professional at all times when interacting with classmates and instructors. When additional clarification is required for exam questions, students should follow the exam question challenge policy.
31. It is unacceptable for a student to take a photograph or screenshot of any part of an exam or quiz while taking the exam or during review process. This behavior would be considered cheating and subject to the disciplinary process up to and including removal from the program. (See full academic integrity policy in the UAC Academic Catalog).
32. Students are not allowed to leave an exam or practical area once the exam or practical has begun. In courses where collaborative or other testing reviews are completed immediately following an exam, students will not be allowed to leave the testing environment until all testing is complete. In the event of an emergency, students will be escorted to the restroom and back to the classroom.

#### Professionalism and General Policies Related to Fieldwork

1. The OTA Program at UA Cossatot strives to provide exemplary fieldwork learning experiences. Fieldwork occurs in settings that will expose students to patients and clients across the age span. These represent a variety of conditions and situations that are typical for an occupational therapy practitioner to work. Students will be required to attend fieldwork at sites that are geographically spread out. These will typically include sites located up to 2 1/2 hours from the Ashdown campus for Level I Fieldwork. Level II Fieldwork is scheduled somewhat differently but will also typically be scheduled within 2 1/2 hours of the Ashdown campus. This fieldwork can, at the student's request, possibly be scheduled in other parts of the country. Please discuss this option with the AFWC early in the program to enable time to complete scheduling.
2. Students are required to provide their own transportation to any agency or institution included in curriculum requirements. This includes but is not limited to all service learning projects, fieldwork experiences, workshops, and conferences. It is the student's responsibility to secure and pay for any lodging required in order to complete Level I or Level II Fieldwork.
3. Under no circumstances should a cell phone or WI-FI enabled watch be seen or activated in the presence of a client or family member while on fieldwork. Cell phones should be left in the student's vehicle. In the event that cell phone use is requested for use by the fieldwork site, the student will need to get prior approval from the AFWC prior to use. In the event this policy is violated while on

Level II FW, an expedited disciplinary process will occur with the student being placed immediately on probation for the remainder of the program.

4. Dress code should be followed.
5. Tablets are required at the direction of the AFWC.
6. Family members (children, spouses, and significant others) are not allowed at any clinical fieldwork site while the student is “on duty”.
7. Students are encouraged to participate in discussions with the instructor and fieldwork supervisor, especially for clarification purposes. Discussion should remain professional; arguing and disruptive/nonprofessional behavior will not be tolerated.
8. Sleeping will not be tolerated. If the student is unable to stay awake during clinicals, the student will be asked to leave the area for the day, and time will be subtracted from the student’s sixty (60) hours.
9. Students are not allowed to smoke while at any fieldwork or community service event. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure their clothing and or scrubs do not smell of smoke while attending fieldwork or community service event.
10. Student advising will be available throughout the fieldwork experience. (See the advising policy in this Handbook)
11. Breaks and lunches will vary due to each institution's protocol, i.e., hospitals, etc. Lunch may be on your own or scheduled with the facility. Students are expected to follow the directions and or scheduling of the facility for lunch breaks. This may include taking lunch with staff and or clients. Timely return from breaks and lunches are required.
12. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure the Program Director and AFWC has updated telephone and other contact information within 24 hours of any changes. Failure to ensure the program has adequate means to communicate with the student will result in disciplinary action up to and including being removed from the program.

Students are expected to be aware of and comply with these professional, ethical, and etiquette standards. Acting in a manner counter to these standards will result in consequences that reflect the severity of the infraction. Violation of any of these standards will lead to disciplinary action up to and including being removed from the program. (See Discipline Policy in this handbook for specific action)

Sladyk, K. (Ed.). (2015). *Ryan's occupational therapy assistant: Principles, practice issues and techniques*. Thorofare, NJ: Slack.

## Cell Phone/Tablet Policy

Students are not be allowed to bring cell phones or cellular/Wi-Fi enabled watches into the classroom/lab.

During classroom/lab days, cells phones may be brought into the building but must be silenced or turned off. Students may check their phones on breaks or lunch but will be responsible for returning his/her phone to the “off” setting prior to re-entering. Students will receive a written reprimand (incident report) in the event a cell phone is seen or activated in class. In the event of an EMERGENCY, the program staff will transfer calls to the department and the message will be relayed to the instructor. If the student is in a clinical setting the secretary will contact program staff, who will make contact with the fieldwork site and student of the situation.

Tablets and laptop computers are allowed in the classroom at the discretion and direction of the instructor. Please be certain that the use of tablets and laptops coincides with the topic being discussed in the class at that time. Social media is not allowed. This includes but is not limited to iMessage, Facebook Messenger, Snapchat, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Any student using tablets or laptops for other purposes during class will be subject to disciplinary action. Tablets and laptops should be in airplane mode when utilized in class for note-taking purposes.

NOTE: Any assignment or communication that is noted to be submitted during a time when the student is in a different class will receive a zero grade.

Tablets must be charged and updated prior to class. Any assignment/exam that is delayed due to charging and/or updating will result in the late assignment/exam policy.

A cell phone/tablet violation will be documented as a violation of professional behaviors.

## Dress Code

Students' behavior, professionalism, and appearance are representative of themselves, UA Cossatot, and the profession of occupational therapy. Cleanliness and neatness are necessities. Students are expected to arrive to the classroom, lab, and fieldwork clean and neat and following the required program dress code. Specific dress codes are required for class, lab, professional presentations, fieldwork and skills assessments.

Violation of the dress code will result in the student being sent home with time deducted from the allotted amount of absence time. A uniform/dress code violation will be documented as a violation of professional behaviors.

### FIELDWORK AND LAB COMPETENCIES/SKILL CHECKOFF ATTIRE

The UA Cossatot OTA Program requires the school's scrubs and matching lab coats. Uniform scrubs and patches will be ordered prior to your initial fieldwork rotation through the College. Do not purchase these on your own (see estimated expense sheet for cost). All students are required to purchase two sets of scrubs through the college to ensure uniform dress and fit for all students. This does not include shoes. You will obtain those on your own. Students should not purchase scrubs from former students except to be used as extra lab attire.

The Cossatot Medical emblem patch must be sewn (approximately 2 inches from the shoulder) on the left arm of each uniform top **and** lab coat. Please be certain that the patch is sewn on appropriately. It is a violation of the dress code policy for the patch to be miss-sewn (crooked, wrinkled, or poorly spaced) or only partially attached. Some fieldwork rotations may require alternate dress depending on the activities to be completed. All changes to the uniform dress code must be pre-approved by the Program Director or AFWC.

Scrubs are not to be worn in non-clinical settings. In essence, scrubs should only be worn from home to the clinical setting or to the school for skills assessments. If you have plans before or after, bring a change of clothes.

**Students must have their UA Cossatot picture ID visible at all times when during skills assessments on campus and while in clinical settings. If a student arrives at a fieldwork site or a skills assessment without his/her ID badge, the student will be sent to obtain the ID badge and time will be deducted until the student returns. This will result in the make-up policy and grading for skills assessments.**

In addition to the uniform scrubs, fieldwork, and lab skill checkoff dress code includes:

- Use of deodorant.
- No perfumes, colognes, or aftershave (you should be odorless).



- Natural nails (no artificial nails or overlays). Nails must be kept short and only clear nail polish may be used.
- Natural eyelashes (no artificial lashes or extensions).
- Hair should be clean and neatly restrained. Long hair must be kept tied back from the face and off the back (should not hang down when the student bends over—if hair is long enough to fall forward in your face when you lean forward, it must be pulled back). Hair color and style should not be extreme; natural hair colors include: blonde, brown, black, and red. Student should see instructor with any questions.
- No ornamental hair clips/barrettes/bands/beads (be conservative).
- Beards/mustaches should be neatly trimmed and short; men should otherwise be cleanly shaven. (Please note that some clinical sites will require students to be cleanly shaven. Students are expected to comply with requirements of the site. In the event a facility refuses to allow a student placement based on facial hair, UAC is not responsible for locating an alternate clinical placement.
- Uniforms must be neat and ironed and shoes must be clean. “No-show” socks are not allowed. “Tennis” shoes should be mostly white, black, or grey in color and conservative. Leather is recommended. “Nursing” shoes may be worn, but must cover the entire foot (no clogs or open-toed/open-backed shoes).
- Undergarments should not be visible. A grey, black, or white short or mid-sleeved undershirt is optional for warmth. Grey, black, or white socks may be worn with the uniform. Uniform should provide for appropriate coverage of private body parts including breasts, abdomen, and buttocks.
- For smokers, find a way to make sure that you and your uniform/lab jacket *does not* smell of smoke upon entering the clinical facility.
- Cosmetics should be used in moderation.
- Jewelry will be limited to neutral color watch and wedding band (ring cannot stick up or have jagged edges). No other jewelry will be allowed. This includes but not limited to: earrings, tongue rings, nose rings, eyebrow rings and piercing spacers/retainers/labrets.
- Tattoos may be visible if the images or words do not convey violence, discrimination, profanity, or sexually explicit content. Tattoos containing such messages must be covered with bandages, clothing, or cosmetics. In addition, students will be required to follow specific facility policies during clinical/fieldwork regarding exposed tattoos (regardless of content—offensive or not). If students are unable to comply with facility policies, they will be removed, and alternate placement will not be offered.
- Watch with a sweeping second-hand arm. **Smart watches** and other Wi-Fi/cellular-enabled watches are **NOT** allowed in the fieldwork, lab, or classroom settings.

**THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL ITEMS MUST BE WITH THE STUDENT DURING FIELDWORK:**

Traditional Watch with Sweeping Second Hand  
 ID Badge  
 Tablet (device must be pre-approved for use on fieldwork)  
 Black Pens  
 Scissors  
 Student Bag with Gait Belt (Level II Fieldwork only)  
 Stethoscope (Level II Fieldwork only)

At times, specific fieldwork sites may advise alternative dress. This must **always** be approved by the AFWC or the OTA Program Director **prior to occurrence**. If a fieldwork site requests alternate dress, it is the student's responsibility to let the Program Director/AFWC know and request prior approval.

## CLASSROOM ATTIRE

Dress code for the classroom should be casual attire with regard to appropriately covering of private body parts (no short-shorts, shirts that show the midriff, cleavage, yoga pants, etc.). In the event that "legging" or "yoga" type pants are worn, the student's shirt should completely cover the student's bottom. Students should have shoes and clothing appropriate for class and lab activities available for **EVERY** class/lab.

## CLASSROOM PRESENTATION ATTIRE

Students are expected to maintain professional dress during presentations. Professional attire *excludes* denim (any color), t-shirts, sagging or baggy pants and any shoe that can be considered a flip flop. See course syllabus for specifics of individual course presentation requirements. Some presentations may require a more formal approach to "business/professional" dress.

## LAB ATTIRE

Lab classes *will* require alternate dress as directed by the OTA Program Director and course instructor to allow for the nature of the individual lessons. Students are expected to maintain and have available appropriate clothing for scheduled activities **at all times including schedule adjustments**. It is recommended that students maintain a change of clothes that would be appropriate for labs at all times in their bag/locker and/or automobile. This includes access to a sports bra and/or tank top, pants, shorts, and tennis shoes **at all times**. The following items will be required for lab sessions:

- Shorts, t-shirts, and tank tops (not tights or yoga pants)
- Back fastening, halter-type tops for females with a tank top
- Tank top for males
- Clothes to cover up
- Tennis shoes
- Hair should be up and away from face and off neck in every lab

## **SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT ATTIRE**

Service learning projects may require alternate attire as directed by the OTA Program Director. These may be professional attire, UA Cossatot polo/t-shirt, scrubs, or other as directed.

## **WORKSHOP OR SCHOOL-RELATED FUNCTION ATTIRE**

When attending professional workshops or school-related functions, professional attire will be worn with the student's lab jacket and name badge. Professional attire *excludes* denim (any color), t-shirts, sagging or baggy pants, and any shoe that can be considered a flip-flop. Workshops and functions may require alternate attire as directed by the OTA Program Director. These may be professional attire, UA Cossatot polo/t-shirt, scrubs, or other as directed.

UAC OTA 2024 - 2025

# Attendance Policy

ATTENDANCE RECORDS ARE **STRICTLY** KEPT

The UA Cossatot OTA Program is a professional program designed to prepare students to enter the professional arena. As such attendance is vital.

General Attendance Policies:

1. Students are expected to be diligent in the pursuit of their studies and regular in their class attendance. Students have the responsibility of making arrangements satisfactory to the instructor regarding all absences and tardies. Excessive absences or tardies will result in failure of the course and result in the removal from the program.
2. Attendance is mandatory at **ALL** student organization activities, seminars, fieldtrips, service learning projects, conventions, or required school functions that have been arranged. It is the nature of some service learning projects to provide more or less notice to the student for scheduling. The OTA program will seek to provide as much notice as possible prior to on and off campus events. Students will be notified of required activities in class, by email, or through Blackboard. If absences occur, it will be the student's responsibility to keep up with all coursework and assignments during these absences. This includes but is not limited to lectures, note-taking, clinical assignments, and other activities scheduled throughout the day.
3. Absences and tardiness are *strongly discouraged*; however, time has been built in to allow for life circumstances. Students are allowed to miss a **TOTAL** of **60 hours** during the program. Students will be administratively withdrawn after **60 hours** of absence. Of this 60 hours, only 12 hours can be missed of Level I FW during the didactic portion of the program. Of this 60 hours, only 16 hours can be missed during Level II FW.

Theory and fieldwork begin promptly. It is the student's responsibility to be on time. This program should be viewed as a job and timeliness is very important. The OTA program student day will typically begin at 8:00 or 9:00 am (although some fieldwork and class activities may have earlier or later start times). Some evening and weekend classes are scheduled throughout the program.

Students will be considered tardy if arriving after the assigned time (at 8:00:01 am). If tardy, a minimum of **one hour** will be deducted from the total number of hours allowed. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Any time missed following the first hour will be deducted on half hour (30 minutes) increments. Leaving early is strongly discouraged. If a student chooses to leave early, time will be deducted from when the student leaves, until the routine scheduled dismissal time, *even if class is dismissed early.* Time less than one hour will be recorded as 1 hour. Additional time will be deducted in 30-minute increments. **Time will be kept by the instructor according to the institution's/instructor's time clock.**

4. Notification of absence or tardy: In the event of an absence or tardy, the student should make contact with the instructor (cc'ed to the PD and AFWC) by **email**, using college accounts, **prior to the scheduled start time of class or activity**. In the case of an emergency, notification should be made as soon as possible. When the student is scheduled for clinical education rotation or a community service/education event, the student must notify the AFWC and the clinical education site of the absence/tardy at least one hour before the scheduled time of arrival. Notification of absence or tardy must be provided by **phone to the clinical site** and **by email to the AFWC/PD**, using college accounts. Failure to do so will result in an incident report and will result in disciplinary action. Students are to make notifications for themselves. Family members or friends should not call in for the student, unless the student cannot call in for himself or herself (i.e., accident, hospitalized, etc.)
5. Students who are tardy, leave early, or absent shall contact to the AFWC to complete an absentee slip. For all absences or tardies, students must sign their attendance log and absentee slip indicating an understanding of current attendance hours. It is the student's responsibility to verify hours and report any discrepancies within one week of the student's absence.
6. *Absences and tardiness **will** affect grades and attendance hours and excessive of either will result in being removed from the program.* A tardy is any late arrival that is not pre-arranged with the instructor at least 1 hour in advance. All tardies will be documented. **A third tardy will be considered a chronic behavioral issue and will be recorded as a violation of professional behaviors.** Any additional tardies after the third will be recorded as individual violations of professional behaviors and lead to progressive discipline including removal from the program.
7. All makeup work is the student's responsibility including any late assignments or exams. Students must complete ALL assignments/exams in order to meet the course objectives. Students not meeting the course objectives will receive an "F" in the course. See exam and late assignment policy for grading specifics.
8. All hours missed will count towards the total of 60 hours even if clinical time is made up. Clinical makeup will be scheduled at the instructor's convenience and may include evenings or weekends. All clinical hours must be made up before the end of each rotation. Makeup clinical is not credited back to the student's overall hours allowed.
9. Attendance related to assignments: Early exams will not be given. If a student arrives late to take an exam and the exam is already in progress, the student will not be allowed to enter the classroom. The student must go directly to make arrangements with OTA program staff for a makeup exam. The student will have 10% deducted from their exam grade. If a student is absent for the entire day, the student must take the exam immediately upon returning to class. In the event the exam is not taken

immediately upon return, a zero grade will be awarded. (see late assignment/exam policy in this Handbook for additional specifics).

10. No Contact Tardy/Absence--Class-Lab: Contact not made prior to beginning of activity: **THIS REALLY SHOULD NOT OCCUR**. You have a phone—use it. In the event of an **emergency** resulting in an unscheduled absence or tardy, you must make contact with your instructor prior to the start time of the class. If you even anticipate that you **might** be late or absent, you should make the contact. In the event that a student does not make contact with the instructor or PD prior to the start time, a no-contact tardy/absence will be recorded, which is an automatic violation of professional behaviors. Contact should always be made by email, but students can follow up with a text if this is an appropriate form of contact for their instructor.
11. No Call/No Show Absence—Class-Lab: In the event a student does not contact their instructor prior to the start of class or lab, the student is required to contact the instructor/PD within 24 hours. A lack of contact within 24 hours of a scheduled class or lab will be recorded as a No-call/No-show absence. A no call/no show for class/lab within 24 hours will be recorded as an automatic violation of professional behaviors. Failure to contact within 24 hours will result in an automatic administrative removal from the program.

## Level I Fieldwork/Service Learning Projects/Scheduled Community Service Attendance

**\*\*\*All activities are mandatory\*\*\***

As all activities are mandatory, additional attendance policies apply as follows:

- **Event Conflict with 48-hour notice:**
  - In the event of a specific conflict with scheduled Level I FW, seminar, fieldtrip, conference, community service or service learning project hours, students will be allowed to make a request to reschedule to a different day prior to the event. This should only occur with **dire cause** and will only be allowed **one time during the didactic portion of the program** with documentation of the event. Request must be made a minimum of 48 hours in advance in order to be considered. **NOT ALL REQUESTS WILL BE ABLE TO BE APPROVED**. If this is not a dire occurrence, **DO NOT ASK**.
  - Adjustments to the schedule will only be approved at the discretion of the AFWC when appropriate and available. Some events **will not** be able to be rescheduled. If the reschedule is approved, makeup of the event hours will be at the discretion of the AFWC. In the event an activity cannot be rescheduled (i.e. one-time event) students will be subject to the emergency unscheduled absence policy.

- In the event appropriate notice is given and the schedule change is approved, student attendance log will not reflect deducted hours. Again, this can only occur one time without consequence during the program. *Students are encouraged to guard this opportunity carefully.* In the event of a second occurrence during the program, student will be subject to the emergency unscheduled absence policy.
  
- **Emergency Unscheduled Absence (less than 48 hours' notice with contact prior to start of event):**
  - In the event of an **emergency** resulting in an unscheduled absence with less than 48 hours' notice or on the day of scheduled Level I Fieldwork, community service activity, or service learning project, students are required to follow the Call In Policy and contact the instructor, the AFWC and the Fieldwork Site prior to the start time. Failure to notify of absence prior to the start time will result in "no contact" disciplinary action.
  - If an unscheduled emergency absence occurs with communication (contact prior to the start of the event), students will have time deducted on the attendance log and will be required to submit documentation of the occurrence to the AFWC within 48 hours. This documentation will be required in an official format such as physician note, letterhead from attorney, police report, etc.
  - All missed hours will be applied to the 60 program hours as well as the allowed maximum of 12 Level I Fieldwork hours.
  
- **No Contact Tardy/Absence—Level I Fieldwork/Service Learning/Community Service Activity**
  - Contact **not** made prior to beginning of activity: **THIS REALLY SHOULD NOT OCCUR**
  - You have a phone—use it. In the event of an **emergency** resulting in an absence or tardy, you must make contact with the AFWC and the clinical site prior to the start time of the activity. If you even anticipate that you might be late or absent, you should make the contact. In the event that a student does not make contact with the clinic site and AFWC prior to the start time, a no-contact tardy/absence will be recorded, which is an automatic violation of professional behaviors. Contact should always be made by phone call to site and email to AFWC.

- Missed hours will be applied as with any absence, however, the no contact will be recorded as a violation of professional behaviors.
  
- **Action and Grading with Fieldwork/Service Learning/Scheduled Community Service schedule changes:**
  - In the event of a dire event and policy is followed with 48 hours of notice given, the absence is approved, and the event is rescheduled; the note submitted for the fieldwork/activity day will be graded at full credit and no time will be deducted from attendance log. (Remember this can only happen one time during the didactic portion of the program).
  - With any emergency unscheduled fieldwork/activity schedule change that occurs with less than 48 hours of notice given or on the day of the activity, but *where communication is made prior to the start of the activity*, the note (once hours are made up) must be submitted with a 76% passing effort and will receive a maximum of 50% of the possible points with the attendance log adjusted as stated above.
  - With any emergency unscheduled fieldwork/activity schedule change that occurs with less than 48 hours of notice given, and *where communication is **NOT** made prior to the start of the activity*, the note (once hours are made up) must be submitted with a 76% passing effort and will receive a zero grade with the attendance log adjusted as stated above. Counseling will occur as above.
  - In the event scheduled fieldwork or service activity is cancelled by the site and timeframe is less than 48 hours, the note submitted for grading once hours are made up will receive full credit and no time deducted from attendance log. Proof of site cancellation **MUST** be provided and confirmed by the AFWC.

## Level II Fieldwork Attendance

- **Attendance is mandatory.**
- Each fieldwork site will have an established schedule for the student to follow. This will include time of day to arrive, leave, take lunch, and take breaks. Some sites may require early arrival or late departure. **Any** adjustments to a typical workweek schedule (which is established prior to the beginning of the rotation) must be pre-approved by the AFWC.
- In the event of a specific conflict that arises during Level II FW, students will be allowed to make a *request* to the AFWC to reschedule or adjust time on a different day in order to make up the difference. This is only to occur *prior to the event* and should only occur *with dire cause* (such as an



emergency doctor appointment that cannot be rescheduled, funerals, etc.). Requests must be made a minimum of *48 hours in advance* in order to be considered. Student request of adjustment to the schedule will only be allowed one time per Level II Fieldwork Rotation. **Students should make requests to their fieldwork supervisor and must be confirmed with the AFWC by email prior to the event.** Given appropriate notification with approval and clinical hours made up; student will not have attendance record deduction.

- In the event of an *emergency* resulting in an unscheduled absence or tardy (less than 48 hours' notice) but with communication prior to the start, each student will be allowed up to sixteen hours (16 hours) of clinical time that can be missed during all of Level II Fieldwork. In the event of an emergency, students are required to contact the AFWC and the Fieldwork Site *prior* to the start the fieldwork rotation day. During Level II FW, tardies will continue to apply to the log started at the beginning of the program.
- Absence or tardy without communication prior to the start will be subject to No Contact Policy.
- Students are required to contact the AFWC within 24 hours absence. Any absence without contact within 24 hours to the site and program faculty will result in a failing grade and will result in automatic removal from the program.
- Documentation relating to the emergency will be required submitted to the AFWC within 3 days of the absence. The student will be required to make up any clinical hours missed prior to the scheduled end of the fieldwork rotation. Remember, that even though these hours are made up, these hours, too, are deducted from the TOTAL of 60 HOURS that can be missed throughout the OTA Program. Additionally, each Level II Fieldwork Experience has a minimum of 256 hours that must be completed over an 8-week period.
- The student's OTA Program Attendance Log is maintained by the AFWC.

## **Holidays, Vacations, and College Closings:**

Class/Lab:

Many holidays and vacations observed by UA Cossatot are observed by the OTA Program for class/lab. Please see the monthly calendar for specific days.

In the event of a sudden school closing (i.e., inclement weather), students will be notified by the mass text system, local radio and TV, blackboard announcement, or Facebook of a school closure that effects reporting to *class*. All students are required to register with the program director for a group text message system. As our campus serves a wide geographic area, the student is encouraged to use good judgment when it comes to travel in their particular area and follow the call-in policy if safe travel is deemed uncertain.

#### Level I Fieldwork:

- Holidays and Vacations: Level I FW is typically scheduled around recognized college holidays and vacations.
- Inclement Weather College Open: Despite inclement weather, whenever the College is open, fieldwork will be held as scheduled.
  - If the facility where Level I FW is scheduled is closed due to weather, students should plan to reschedule and notify the AFWC immediately to establish a day to make up days or hours as needed.
  - If the facility where Level I FW is scheduled remains open, the student should plan on completing FW as scheduled.
- Inclement Weather College Closed: As Level I FW covers a large geographic area, it will *not* be cancelled automatically with campus closures.
  - If the facility where Level I FW is scheduled is closed due to weather, students should plan to reschedule and notify the AFWC immediately to establish a day to make up days or hours as needed.
  - If the facility where Level I FW is scheduled remains open, the student should plan on completing FW as scheduled.

Students are, however, encouraged to use good judgment with maintaining safe travel and contact the AFWC when questions arise. The call-in policy should be followed if safe travel is deemed uncertain.

#### Level II Fieldwork:

- Holidays and Vacations: Level II FW is scheduled at times across recognized holidays and vacations. Students are to follow the schedule of the facility. If the clinical facility is open or closed for a holiday (example Labor Day and Thanksgiving Day) then the student should follow the facility schedule. The holiday should be noted on the student's timesheet to ensure that time is made up over the course of the fieldwork experience. **The AFWC should be notified of any schedule changes.**
- Inclement Weather College Open or Closed: Since Level II FW covers a large geographic area, it will *not* be cancelled automatically with campus closures. Students should follow the schedule of the facility. It is very important that students have a method of communication with their fieldwork educator to ensure proper notification. Missed hours should be noted on the student's timesheet to ensure that time is made up over the course of the fieldwork experience. **The AFWC should be notified of any schedule changes.**

Students are, however, encouraged to use good judgment with maintaining safe travel and contact the AFWC when questions arise. The call-in policy should be followed if safe travel is deemed uncertain.

## Call-In Policy—Class/Lab

- If the student foresees an absence or tardy, the student must **EMAIL** (texting is not allowed) and make contact with the instructor via **EMAIL prior** to the scheduled start time of class. Students should email the instructor with the AFWC and PD cc'ed on email. Missed time will be recorded on the attendance record. (see attendance policy in this Handbook)
- Students are to call in for themselves. Family members or friends should not call in for the student, unless the student cannot call in for themselves (i.e., accident, hospitalized, etc.).
- Failure to notify the instructor/program administrators of tardiness or absence prior to start time will result in an incident report for no contact and will be subject to the disciplinary process. In this case, notification should be made as soon as possible and is required within 24 hours. Documentation of the emergency will be required. (See No Contact Tardy/Absence Policy and No Call/No Show Policies in this Handbook)

## Call-In Policy---Level I Fieldwork/Service Learning Projects/Scheduled Community Service Attendance

- Attendance is mandatory.
- **In the event of an emergency** that will result in an absence or being tardy, the student must make contact with the AFWC/instructor by EMAIL **and** the site via phone (no texting allowed) **at least one hour prior** to the scheduled start time of activity. (See attendance policy in this Handbook)
- Students are to call in for themselves. Family members or friends should not call in for the student, unless the student cannot call in for themselves (i.e., accident, hospitalized, etc.).
- Failure to notify of lateness or absence to the AFWC and the fieldwork site will result in an incident report for no contact and will be reflected on your clinical evaluation and subject to the disciplinary process. In this case, notification should be made as soon as possible and is required within 24 hours. Documentation of the emergency will be required. (See No Contact Tardy/Absence and the No Call/No Show Policies in this Handbook)

## Call-In Policy---Level II Fieldwork

- Attendance is mandatory.
- **In the event of an emergency** that will result in an absence or being tardy, the student must make contact with the AFWC via EMAIL **and** the site via phone (no texting allowed) **at least one hour**

**prior** to the scheduled start time of fieldwork. (This should be a rare occurrence. See attendance policy for Level II FW for repercussions of absences in this Handbook).

- Students are to call in for themselves. Family members or friends should not call in for the student, unless the student cannot call in for themselves (i.e., accident, hospitalized, etc.).
- Failure to phone in lateness or absence to the AFWC and the fieldwork site will result in an incident report for no contact and will be reflected on your clinical evaluation and subject to the disciplinary process. In this case, notification should be made as soon as possible and is required within 24 hours. Documentation of the emergency will be required. (See No Contact Tardy/Absence and No Call/No Show Policies in this Handbook)

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## Selection and Scheduling Process of Level I & II Fieldwork Sites for Student Rotation

Student fieldwork assignments are the decision of the AFWC and are final. There are a multitude of factors that go into placements. Additionally, there are a limited number of sites available at any given time. Even after a match is confirmed, sites may cancel due to internal institutional issues. Students are not permitted to contact sites directly to request a placement. Doing so will result in an automatic disqualification for that site.

- Level I Fieldwork Scheduling Process: Level I Fieldwork occurs during each semester while in the OTA Program. Students are assigned to Level I Fieldwork on a random rotational basis by the AFWC. Sites are typically located within a 2 1/2 hours radius from the UA Cossatot OTA Program campus in Ashdown, AR.
- Level II Fieldwork Scheduling Process: All students complete two (eight week) Level II Fieldwork Rotations upon the successful completion of the theory portion of the OTA Program. Level II Fieldwork can be completed on a part-time basis as defined by the fieldwork placement in accordance with the fieldwork placement's usual and customary personnel policies, as long as it is at least 50% of an FTE at that site. All Level II Fieldwork must be completed within 18 months of completion of the theory portion in order to graduate.

To ensure access to highly diverse learning experiences, students are required to complete Level II FW rotations in different settings typically within a 2 1/2 hour radius from the Ashdown, AR campus. All students are required to complete one of the Level II rotations in a physical dysfunction setting. The remaining Level II rotation may be completed in a pediatric setting, a psychosocial setting, or an additional physical dysfunction setting. If the second rotation is an additional physical dysfunction setting it must be of a different type than the first rotation. The policy of UA Cossatot is to assign students to complete Level II Fieldwork at two different settings but this could be completed in up to a maximum of three different settings if needed. Additionally, completion of both Level II Fieldwork rotations in one fieldwork site is possible only if the site provides more than one practice area.

During the Spring Semester, the AFWC provides students with the list of possible level II fieldwork sites. Students are then asked to prioritize up to three sites for each rotation. To select sites, students then draw a random number to sequence the student choices. Students with first draw will have first choice for the first rotation. Student number 2 will have second choice, and so on. For the second rotation the choice order is reversed. Number 15 will have first choice; number 14 second choice, etc.

## Level I/Level II Fieldwork Placement Special Needs Consideration

Appeals for special consideration in fieldwork placement are based on demonstrated need for one of the following reasons: mitigating circumstances or students with disabilities who have identified themselves to the disabilities coordinator. Requests found to be made on false claims will be overturned and denied, and students may be removed from the program for this highly unethical behavior.

Students with a disability are encouraged to voluntarily disclose their needs for fieldwork accommodations with the disabilities coordinator well in advance of fieldwork placement. They are also encouraged to voluntarily disclose their need for academic accommodations with the AFWC prior to selection of fieldwork sites. Then, through collaboration with AFWC, the student and the site, an accommodation plan may be developed.

As with classroom expectations, fieldwork outcome expectations will be the same for all students regardless of abilities/disabilities. However, strategies to achieve entry-level competency may differ based on individual needs. Once an eligible student has disclosed the need for accommodation and/or accessibility to the academic fieldwork coordinator, and has signed a release of information, the fieldwork educator and/or fieldwork supervisor may then be contacted to discuss strategies to be implemented at the fieldwork site.

## Level I/Level II Fieldwork Cancellation

As noted previously, student fieldwork assignments are *final*. A fieldwork site, however, may need to cancel a confirmed placement, unexpectedly prior to the beginning of or during the rotation. This happens for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, staffing issues, or staffing changes leading to inadequate supervision or a poor learning environment. In addition, occasionally, a facility closes or merges with another organization and the confirmation of placement cannot be honored.

In the event a cancellation should occur, the procedure is as follows:

- AFWC is notified the fieldwork placement has been cancelled by the site
- The AFWC will contact and schedule a meeting with effected student to discuss replacement options
- AFWC will work closely with student to reschedule the experience if appropriate
- Rescheduling the FW rotation is not guaranteed

## **Level I/Level II Fieldwork Conflict of Interest**

Student will **not** be placed at a clinical site where a family member may be in a supervisory capacity of the student or student's supervisor. A student will not be assigned to a site where he or she has already accepted a job or is negotiating employment. In addition, students are not permitted to do fieldwork placements at facilities where they have been previously employed. Under no circumstances should students contact clinical sites to discuss or request future site placement. The AFWC will make all initial contact with clinical sites.

## **Level I/Level II Fieldwork Placement/Scheduling Appeals Process**

As noted previously, student fieldwork assignments are *final*. However, extreme circumstances could precipitate the need to review a student's placement. Mitigating circumstances are those that are beyond the student's control, such as: 1) serious illness or injury to the student; 2) death or serious illness of an immediate family member; or 3) other special circumstances that could not have been foreseen. A student not meeting the requirements for a site due to not receiving a required vaccination will **NOT** be considered for appeal.

In order for a review of placement to occur, students should file a written appeal of fieldwork placement and/or request for a change of affiliation scheduling with the AFWC. These will not be considered unless there are mitigating circumstances. Please be advised that any change in placement is not guaranteed and may delay a student's start date and ultimately the student's graduation date.

Appeals process:

- Students have one day from the date of notification of fieldwork placement or onset of special circumstance to submit a letter of appeal to the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. This letter should include a detailed description of the mitigating circumstances.
- AFWC will review application and provide an appeal decision.
- All decisions will be reviewed by the Program Director and Division Chair and made official.
- Students will be notified of appeal decision within one week of receipt of appeal.
- If the appeal is denied, the appeal decision will be final. In the event a student refuses the assigned FW rotation, the student will be removed from the OTA Program.
- In the event the appeal is granted, the AFWC will attempt to locate alternate placement. No guarantee an alternate placement can be found or as to the timing or location of the placement.

## Assignments-Blackboard

All courses in the OTA program at UA Cossatot are enhanced with the use of the Blackboard Learning Management computer system. Students will be required to complete a tutorial during the Intro to OTA course (OTA 1113) as well as at the beginning of the online OTA 2402 Professional Issues in OT course to ensure familiarity with the system. Additionally, there is a power point presentation available under the assignment tab on Blackboard that will assist with questions on the use of the Blackboard system.

Throughout the program, students will be assigned various papers, projects, or group assignments. Criteria for each assignment, including deadlines, will be given in conjunction with the assignment. All assignments turned in are to be typed and double spaced unless otherwise stated. Students may use any color ink or pencils for their own notes but handwritten submitted papers should be in black in a format indicated by the course instructor. All assignments should include student name, date, and course number following the OTA Program Assignment Header. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated; both of which are grounds for immediate dismissal from the program (see the UA Cossatot academic catalog and the plagiarism section of the OTA student handbook). Assignments may be submitted on paper or through the blackboard system as indicated by the course instructor.

Student assignments that are submitted through Blackboard will need to be saved in a specific file format as indicated by the instructor using the assigned program header.

Support for the use of the Blackboard system is provided through course instructors, the director of distance learning/blackboard coordinator, and the IT department at UA Cossatot. Students are directed first to utilize blackboard online help then to contact their course instructor or the Program Faculty staff with any difficulties with the Blackboard system. The distance learning director/blackboard coordinator can be contacted at 870-584-1137. The UA Cossatot IT department is available by contacting 870-584-1165. When the above are unavailable or additional assistance is required, students may access the Blackboard Learn Helpdesk through the University of Arkansas at (479) 575-6804. The helpdesk is available Monday – Thursday 7am – 10 pm, Friday 7am – 5 pm, Saturday 11am – 4 pm, and Sunday 4 pm – 11pm and can be reached at [bbhelp@uark.edu](mailto:bbhelp@uark.edu).

While in the OTA Program, students will be required to use a tablet for charting purposes and the submission of notes, assignments, and exams. Also during fieldwork, students will be required to fill out and submit a time log and patient encounters either on paper or electronically as indicated by your instructor and the fieldwork site.



## Late Assignments/Exams

All assignments must be submitted by the assigned due date and time established by the instructor. Any assignment received after the due date and time will receive a “zero” (0) score. However, the student **must** complete the work assigned and make a minimal grade of “76%” on the assignment in order for the assignment to be considered complete. Late assignments must be submitted within 1 week of the notification from the instructor that the assignment was not received. If the required assignment is not completed within this timeframe it will be recorded as a violation of professional behaviors.

Testing/Exams: Early exams will not be given. Ten percent (10%) will be deducted from each exam grade that is missed due to absence or taken late. If a student arrives late to take an exam and the exam is already in progress, the student will not be allowed to enter the classroom. The student must go directly to make arrangements with the OTA program staff for a makeup exam (-10%). *Note: quizzes missed cannot be made up and will result in a zero (0) grade.*

All course make-up exams must be taken in the testing center or under the supervision of program staff immediately upon return to campus. It is the student’s responsibility to make contact with the instructor to make arrangements for make-up exams. If the testing center is closed *and* the instructor is unavailable at the designated time, alternate arrangements will be made. Any student who fails to make arrangements and/or does not take the exam in the required timeframe will receive a “zero” (0) on the exam.

## Grades Policy/Progression Through Courses

UA Cossatot OTA program faculty utilize a gradebook (either electronic through Excel or in a standard paper gradebook) and Blackboard to record student grades. These are updated throughout the week with any test/assignment grades completed. Students are able to access their grades through Blackboard 24/7. This keeps all students and program officials up to date with current status. Students are encouraged to contact their instructors at any time during a course that a question arises with regard to grades and are specifically encouraged at midterm to request assistance if needed with obtaining or understanding current standing. Additionally, students are assigned an OTA program faculty member as an advisor. Students are encouraged to meet with the advisor as needed and at least once a semester to discuss all aspects of the program including but not limited to questions, concerns, grades, fieldwork, and progression through courses, progression through program, current grades and GPA.

Each semester's courses act as prerequisites to the following semester's courses. Students must successfully complete all coursework and Level I Fieldwork prior to progressing to Level II Fieldwork rotations. Failure to successfully complete any of these courses will prohibit the student from continuing in the program and the student will be administratively withdrawn.

No parts of Level I Fieldwork can be "carried over" or utilized as Level II Fieldwork. Students must complete all Level II Fieldwork within 18 months following completion of the didactic portion of the program in order to graduate.

## Grading Scale

The UA Cossatot OTA Program curriculum is designed to meet the requirements of ACOTE (the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education) and to prepare students to successfully complete the NBCOT Certification Examination in order to obtain licensure to practice as a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant.

Students will receive a grade for classroom work (theory) and for Level I Fieldwork Experiences. Written tests and other assignments will determine theory grades. Fieldwork grades will be figured according to the Level I Fieldwork Professional Behavioral Competency Form (located under the fieldwork tab on Blackboard), daily documentation and homework assignments. Each student must maintain 76% in both classroom (theory) and Level I Fieldwork.

The following grade equivalency is established for all theory and Level I Fieldwork classes in accordance with the Medical Education Division at UA Cossatot:

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89
- C = 76-79
- D = 70-75 (failing)
- F = <69 (failing)

Content for exams are based on subject matter from textbooks, videos, handouts and lecture. Other assignments include but are not limited to: written assignments, oral presentations, team projects, classroom activities, service learning projects, project development, etc. Course grades are rounded from the 100<sup>th</sup> place to obtain final grade.

If you feel that you have been graded unfairly on an exam question, it is your right to request a re-evaluation of your answer choice. Please note that this does not say “if you are unhappy with scores”—unless it is perfect, we’re never completely happy with the scores we get. While you have every right to dislike your score (and dislike us for giving you that score), you do not have the right to get a better score because of it. You do have the right to be treated fairly (i.e. equally with everyone else in the class), and it is for this reason that we have this policy.

### Exam Question Review Process

Following the review of any exam, students should always research the exam and responses on their own using their notes and learning materials. If questions remain, students are encouraged to discuss the questions and material with the instructor, ensuring full understanding. Once these measures have been followed, students can request a formal exam question review by completing the Question Review Form.

The Exam Question Review Form (found under OTA Program Recourses in BB) should be completed within 5 days of the review of the exam along with any justification for the review and submitted to the Program Director. The Program Director will complete a review of the questions and render a final determination within 1 week. The Program Director's decision is final.

## LAB PRACTICUM/SKILLS CHECK-OFF GRADING

Students are required to log at least 2 hours of *on campus practice* time outside of class prior to scheduling any skill competency check. Time may be logged in 15 minute increments before class, after class, during lunch, or on an off day. Students are expected to collaborate with *various* class members for practice. Additionally, students will be expected to be available for working in coordination with cohorts which may include an occasional evening or weekend date. As much notice as possible will be given for scheduling. Practice logs must be presented prior to check off and will be included in student notebook.

All lab skills must be completed at a minimum competency of 76%. If competency is less than 76%, a student will be required to schedule remediation time and then a re-test to achieve 76%. Remediation and re-test must be scheduled in the week following the initial unsuccessful try. It is the student's responsibility to arrange remediation and re-test times with the instructor. Remediation and re-test may (at the discretion of the instructor) be scheduled in the evenings or on the weekend. (In the event an instructor is unavailable for re-test in the next week, the program director will determine the best scheduling time frame for the re-test.) Re-test may occur with different types of test subjects than the original testing situation. A minimum of 15 minutes of documented remediation is required prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt for a competency. A minimum of 2 hours of documented remediation with faculty is required prior to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final attempt. Students are allowed a **maximum for 2 remediations** (3 overall attempts) to achieve the minimum required passing grade on a skills competency. **Any** safety issues noted in any attempt will deem the skills check to be automatically stopped and a failing grade (zero) will be applied.

Three unsuccessful attempts for any skill competency checkoff will result in a non-passing grade in the course and require the student to be immediately administratively withdrawn from all courses in the program. All remediation and re-tests must be completed successfully prior to the final exam for the course. For gradebook purposes, the final score recorded will be the score achieved minus 10% for *each* remediation/retest.

Any student who is tardy or absent for a scheduled competency will receive an initial failing grade and be required to schedule remediation and re-test and be subject to 10% reduction in grade as with any unsuccessful attempt (leaving 2 attempts to demonstrate competency). Attendance hours will be deducted as per policy as appropriate. The call-in policy must be followed.

## Final Competency—Therapeutic Interventions (Spring Semester)

The final exam competency must be completed at a minimum competency of 76%. If the competency is less than 76%, a student will be required to schedule remediation time and then a re-test to achieve 76%. Remediation and re-test must be scheduled in the week following the initial unsuccessful try. It is the student's responsibility to arrange remediation and re-test times with the instructor. Remediation and re-test may (at the discretion of the instructor) be scheduled in the evenings or on the weekend. (In the event an instructor is unavailable for a re-test in the next week, the program director will determine the best scheduling time frame for the re-test.) Re-tests may occur with different types of test subjects than the original testing situation. **A maximum of a single (1) remediation and retest (2 overall attempts)** to achieve the minimum required passing grade will be allowed on the final skills competency. In the event, a 76% is not achieved after two attempts, a failing grade will be applied to the course.

**Any** safety issues noted in either attempt will deem the skills check to be automatically stopped and a failing grade (zero) will be applied.

In the event of a retest, for gradebook purposes, the final score recorded will be the score achieved minus 10% for the remediation/retest.

Any student who is tardy or absent for a scheduled competency will receive an initial failing grade and be required to schedule remediation and re-test and be subject to 10% reduction in grade as with any unsuccessful attempt (leaving 2 attempts to demonstrate competency). Attendance hours will be deducted as per policy as appropriate. The call-in policy must be followed.

Any student who does not have appropriate lab clothing/professional dress for skills competencies will not be allowed to participate in lab until they are obtained. Student will be required to follow the late check off policy and will have attendance hours and grades deducted as appropriate.

## **OTA THEORY & LEVEL I FIELDWORK GRADES ARE BASED ON A POINT SYSTEM AND WILL BE LISTED IN EACH COURSE SYLLABI**

### **Level II Fieldwork Grading**

Student performance while on Level II Fieldwork will be evaluated using the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation Tool and the established Level II FW Rubric. Together these tools assess student competency in many areas including knowledge, skills, theory, assessment practice and tools, interview and interaction skills, and professionalism. The FPWT tool has a minimum passing rating for both

midterm performance and final performance and is considered within the grading rubric. The grade assigned in Level II Fieldwork courses will be Pass/Fail in accordance with the levels of performance assessed with the rubric and will be determined by the AFWC.

## **Student Difficulties—Level II Fieldwork**

It is the student's responsibility for following the chain of command in the FW setting for discussing any problems or issues that may arise. Discussions should first be conducted with the FW educator on site. If resolution is not achieved with the FW educator, the student should attempt to resolve the issue with the FW educator and her/his supervisor. The AFWC is available to assist the student in planning how to approach the FWE and/or supervisor, and how to express her/his concerns or issues. If problems or issues are not resolved at this level, the student should contact the OTA Program Director.

During Level II fieldwork, if the student's performance is not satisfactory at mid-term or at any point in the FW experiences, the AFWC is notified immediately. A review of the student's circumstances will be completed and if the fieldwork is to be continued, a written developmental plan will be developed jointly by the student, FWE, and AFWC. The plan includes a description of the problem, suggested learning strategies, outcomes measures, timelines, and consequences of success or failure to meet timelines. The FWE monitors the progress and provides written feedback for the student at daily/weekly meetings. The student outcome is to develop clinical skills and appropriate professional behaviors. Failure to demonstrate acceptable progress with remediation in any these areas will be grounds for removal from the OTA program due to lack of progress.

The AFWC will keep the OTA Program Director informed of this situation. If the AFWC, the student, and the program director determine that another setting is in the best educational interests of the student, then a different fieldwork placement will be arranged for the student. Timing of replacement rotation is not guaranteed.

Students must notify the AFWC or OTA Program Director prior to abandoning a FW site. Any abandonment of one's professional responsibilities to the patient and facility is considered a serious violation of professional ethics. The student will receive a failing grade if they leave a FW site without notifying the AFWC or Program Director and will be administratively withdrawn from the program.

## **Failure of Fieldwork Level I and Level II**

Fieldwork education is the opportunity to put academic learning into practice. This applied knowledge and critical thinking are paramount to being a successful occupational therapy practitioner. It is necessary to demonstrate proficiency in both the clinical and academic components of both entry

level occupational therapy practice and the professional world of healthcare. Students who do not demonstrate proficiency within the timelines established for fieldwork risk failure.

The fieldwork site may terminate a fieldwork rotation at any time if performance is not satisfactory and/or threatens the patient's treatment/safety. Termination may also occur if the student violates a facility policy or procedure. Examples include but are not limited to drug use, theft of property, unsafe practice, unprofessional behavior, violation of patient's rights, violation of AOTA Code of Ethics, excessive tardiness/absenteeism, or HIPAA violations. It is important for students to be familiar with facility policies and procedures, particularly policies related to patient confidentiality. Depending on the nature of the problem which resulted in the termination of the Fieldwork experience, the student may be withdrawn immediately from the OTA Program and not provided the opportunity for readmission into the Program.

### **Failure to complete a Level I Fieldwork Rotation**

Each Level I Fieldwork course is scheduled with several 3-4 week rotations. However, the inability to complete a Level I Fieldwork rotation most often demonstrates a lack of integration of knowledge and/or a lack of professional behavior. In the event of a failed Level I FW rotation, students will be required to meet with the AFWC to identify causes for the unsuccessful attempt. If the attempt is determined to not be related to violations of safety or ethics, the student will be allowed to continue to subsequent Level I FW rotations, but the failed rotation is required to be successfully made up with a passing score prior to the end of the course. This can occur one time during the OTA Program. If the student is allowed to continue, they are required to meet with the AFWC to establish learning strategies as student moves to the next Level I FW rotation. If a second failure of a Level I FW rotation occurs while in the program, the student will receive a failing grade for the course and be withdrawn from the program.

Failure to successfully complete any of these fieldwork rotations without being made up (or failing more than one rotation) will result in the student failing the Level I FW course and will prohibit the student from continuing in the program. (see program re-admittance policy in this Handbook)

### **Failure to Complete Level II Fieldwork Rotation**

Any student who fails to successfully complete a scheduled Level II Fieldwork experience cannot progress within the program. Fieldwork courses are the demonstration of applied knowledge learned in the curriculum. Failure to successfully complete a fieldwork experience reflects inadequate integration of skills required for progressing towards entry level competency. The inability to demonstrate applied knowledge is justification to limit progression in the curriculum. A student who is unable to demonstrate sufficient progress in development or application of clinical practice skills may be withdrawn from the fieldwork rotation and/or the program.

Program policy is to allow one re-admission to the program in the event of course failure or student withdrawal. Some circumstances, however, may result in academic withdrawal from the program without the option to repeat. Failure to demonstrate applied knowledge in the clinical setting is justification for not repeating admittance. (See Program Re-admittance Policy in this Handbook)

## **Level II Fieldwork Withdrawal Process**

As Level II Fieldwork is a credit course at UA Cossatot, any withdrawal that occurs during the rotation will follow the UA Cossatot course withdrawal policy. See the student academic catalog in print or on the institute website for specifics of policy for process as well as potential effect on financial aid and scholarships. Note that rescheduling of fieldwork rotation following withdrawal is not guaranteed and will be subject to availability of sites and withdrawal circumstances. Per UA Cossatot OTA Program policy all Level II Fieldwork must be completed within 18 months of completion of classwork to be eligible for graduation.



## **Student Grade Appeal Policy (UA Cossatot Policy)**

See UA Cossatot Academic Catalog for full UA Cossatot policy requirements

## **Student Appeals/Grievance Procedure—Non-Grade Issues (UA Cossatot Policy)**

See UA Cossatot Academic Catalog for full UA Cossatot policy requirements.

## **Academic Probation/Suspension (UA Cossatot Policy)**

See UA Cossatot Academic Catalog for full UA Cossatot policy requirements.

The OTA program has specific requirements for grades and progression through courses and the OTA program. Please see the specific attendance, grades, and fieldwork policies in this manual for specifics.

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## **Re-Admission Policy**

Re-admission into the program will be considered on a space available basis only. A student who fails a course or leaves the program for any reason will be permitted one (1) opportunity to re-enroll (regardless of which semester).

Students may not, however, be candidates for re-admission if they committed any of the following while previously enrolled in the OTA program:

- Uncooperative attitude/behavior that was previously addressed with verbal and written warnings
- Insubordination
- Cheating
- Falsification of records
- Positive identification of drug activities (taking, buying, selling, manufacturing, etc.)
- Violation of medical ethics (breach of confidentiality, client abuse, etc.)
- Endangering the health, safety, or life of a client or peer
- Insufficient progress in the development or application of clinical practice skills during Level II Fieldwork (a feedback report of lack of progress, a No Pass score at midterm, or a no pass score on final evaluation equates with insufficient progress).
- Failure to comply with Program and/or Fieldwork Site's rules or procedures

### **Re-admittance During Didactic Portion of Program**

Students are advised that program courses are taught sequentially and concurrently one time during the academic year. A withdrawal for any reason where the re-admission is granted will require re-admittance in the next co-hort. Re-admission will require repeating any previously completed coursework. All coursework must be completed with a "C" or better in the current semester to progress despite a previous passing score.

Students who wish to re-admit to the program will be required to submit a formal letter of intent to the Program Director (and cc'ed to the Academic Advisor for Medical Education) for review. The student will need to include documentation of satisfaction or resolution of the issue that precipitated withdrawal from the program. This may include documentation of a remediation action plan for facilitating successful completion of an OTA program course that was previously not passed successfully.

Students should note that prior to re-admittance they may be required to completely re-do application, TEAS exam, letters of recommendation, interview, video review, CPR certification, criminal background check, drug screening, TB skin test, and immunizations.

Readmitted students who return to the program will be held to the policies and procedures of the current college catalog and current student handbook as well as the current curriculum that is in place for cohort in which they are returning.

### **Re-admittance During Level II Fieldwork Portion of Program (Final Program Semester)**

Upon unsuccessful completion, termination from, or withdrawal from a fieldwork rotation the student will be notified by the AFWC within one week of receiving the results or notification of the fieldwork site and a formal review will be scheduled with the AFWC and/or PD. The student will be advised of the inability to progress with the current fieldwork results and the consequences/impact on progression through the program.

The student may request a review of the circumstances of the failure/withdrawal. The review of the circumstances surrounding the failure or withdrawal will be used to determine if the student should be considered for a re-peat opportunity of the fieldwork rotation or administratively withdrawn from the program.

To be considered for a review of circumstances, the student is required to present to the faculty (in person and in writing) a description of what led to the unsuccessful fieldwork experience, a justification for continuation in the program, and the opportunity to repeat the fieldwork.

If granted re-admission, the student will develop a remediation/action plan in collaboration with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator to address identified issues that led to the unsuccessful attempt. Remedial fieldwork objectives, timeline, and criteria for receiving a passing grade will be established by AFWC and Program Director. Student will be required to sign the plan. Failure of the student to successfully complete the remediation/action plan or the subsequent repeat fieldwork will result in the student being administratively withdrawn from the program. All Level II Fieldwork must be completed within 18 months of completion of didactic coursework to be considered for graduation. Any delay in completion of Level II FW will delay date for graduation and participation in commencement.

## **Transfers**

Due to differences in curriculum in other OTA programs, the UA Cossatot OTA program will not accept transfer students. Students who were enrolled in another program will follow the same requirements and admission procedures. Students will also provide a letter of good standing from the institution previously attended.

## **Graduation Policy**

Students must successfully complete all pre-requisites courses with a grade “C” or better. OTA Program courses must be completed with a 76% or better (see UA Cossatot Academic Catalog). Students must successfully complete all coursework and Level I Fieldwork prior to progressing to Level II Fieldwork

rotations. Students must successfully complete all Level II Fieldwork within 18 months following completion of the didactic portion of the program. Upon completion of all courses and fieldwork, students will be eligible to graduate.

Upon graduation, the student's status will be submitted to the National Board for Certification of Occupational Therapy declaring that the student has completed their Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy and wishes to sit for the board examination.

Graduates of the program will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the OTA, administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the graduate will be a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). In addition, most states require licensure to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT certification examination. A felony conviction or other background information may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT Certification examination and/or attain state licensure.

Additional information on the requirements for the NBCOT Certification Exam and the Arkansas State Medical Board (who regulate Occupational Therapy in the state of Arkansas) can be obtained from the following websites:

[https://www.armedicalboard.org/Professionals/pdf/OT\\_AppPack.pdf](https://www.armedicalboard.org/Professionals/pdf/OT_AppPack.pdf)

<https://www.armedicalboard.org/>

<http://www.nbcot.org/>

<http://www.nbcot.org/early-determination-character-review>

*It is the student's responsibility to ensure they meet the requirements of the regulatory bodies that could adversely affect their ability to sit for the certification examination or complete state licensure. Both NBCOT and the Arkansas State Medical Board offer services for pre-determination of eligibility to sit for the board exam and to be licensed to work in the state. Students are encouraged to investigate these options if any doubt is present about their background prior to beginning the program.*

## **Additional Program Policies**

The following policies are specific to all Medical Education Programs. These are maintained in Blackboard for Student Access and require student signature prior to the beginning of the program. Please refer to each policy on Blackboard for specifics.

**Medical Education Acknowledgment and Agreement of Policies**

**Medical Education Accident Statement**

**Medical Education Blood borne Pathogen Guidelines**

**Medical Education Confidentiality Statement**

**Medical Education Contagious Disease Policy**

**Medical Education Covid-19 Lab and Clinical/Fieldwork Protocol**

**Medical Education Educational Experiences Policy**

**Medical Education Immunization & Document Renewal Policy**

**Medical Education Mental and Physical Abilities Statement**

**Medical Education Online Social Networking Policy**

**Medical Education Payment of Tuition and Fees Policy**

**Medical Education Student Code of Ethics**

**Medical Education Video Classroom Etiquette**

**Medical Education Substance Abuse Policy**

**Medical Education Acknowledgement of Policies and Procedures**

**Medical Education (OTA) Agreement for Performance of Procedures**

**Medical Education (OTA) Program Policy Agreement**

Additional items required purchased and/or uploaded to Blackboard prior to beginning program:

**Current AHA CPR**

**Background Check**

**Arkansas Child Abuse Registry**

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# Infection Control

## *Hand hygiene*

Hand hygiene has been cited frequently as the single most important practice to reduce the transmission of infectious agents in healthcare settings<sup>and</sup> is an essential element of Standard Precautions. The term “hand hygiene” includes both hand washing with either plain or antiseptic-containing soap and water, and use of alcohol-based products (gels, rinses, foams) that do not require the use of water. In the absence of visible soiling of hands, approved alcohol-based products for hand disinfection are preferred over antimicrobial or plain soap and water because of their superior microbicide activity, reduced drying of the skin, and convenience. Improved hand hygiene practices have been associated with a sustained decrease in the incidence of MRSA and VRE infections primarily in the ICU.

## *Personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare personnel*

PPE refers to a variety of barriers and respirators used alone or in combination to protect mucous membranes, airways, skin, and clothing from contact with infectious agents. The selection of PPE is based on the nature of the patient interaction and/or the likely mode(s) of transmission. A suggested procedure for donning and removing PPE that will prevent skin or clothing contamination is presented in the Figure. Designated containers for used disposable or reusable PPE should be placed in a location that is convenient to the site of removal to facilitate disposal and containment of contaminated materials. Hand hygiene is always the final step after removing and disposing of PPE. The following sections highlight the primary uses and methods for selecting this equipment.

## *Gloves*

Gloves are used to prevent contamination of healthcare personnel hands when 1) anticipating direct contact with blood or body fluids, mucous membranes, non-intact skin and other potentially infectious material; 2) having direct contact with patients who are colonized or infected with pathogens transmitted by the contact route e.g., VRE, MRSA, RSV<sup>8</sup>; or 3) handling or touching visibly or potentially contaminated patient care equipment and environmental surfaces. Gloves can protect both patients and healthcare personnel from exposure to infectious material that may be carried on hands.

## *Isolation gowns*

Isolation gowns are used as specified by Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions, to protect the HCW's arms and exposed body areas and prevent contamination of clothing with blood, body fluids, and other potentially infectious material. The need for and type of isolation gown selected is based on the

nature of the patient interaction, including the anticipated degree of contact with infectious material and potential for blood and body fluid penetration of the barrier. The wearing of isolation gowns and other protective apparel is mandated by the OSHA Blood borne Pathogens Standard. Clinical and laboratory coats or jackets worn over personal clothing for comfort and/or purposes of identity are not considered PPE. When applying Standard Precautions, an isolation gown is worn only if contact with blood or body fluid is anticipated. However, when Contact Precautions are used (i.e., to prevent transmission of an infectious agent that is not interrupted by Standard Precautions alone and that is associated with environmental contamination), donning of both gown and gloves upon room entry is indicated to address unintentional contact with contaminated environmental surfaces. The routine donning of isolation gowns upon entry into an intensive care unit or other high-risk area does not prevent or influence potential colonization or infection of patients in those area. Isolation gowns are always worn in combination with gloves, and with other PPE when indicated. Gowns are usually the first piece of PPE to be doffed. Gown is turned inward and rolled into a bundle, and then discarded into a designated container for waste or linen to contain contamination.

#### *Face protection: masks*

Masks are used for three primary purposes in healthcare settings: 1) placed on healthcare personnel to protect them from contact with infectious material from patients e.g., respiratory secretions and sprays of blood or body fluids, consistent with Standard Precautions and Droplet Precautions; 2) placed on healthcare personnel when engaged in procedures requiring sterile technique to protect patients from exposure to infectious agents carried in a healthcare worker's mouth or nose, and 3) placed on coughing patients to limit potential dissemination of infectious respiratory secretions from the patient to others (i.e., Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette). Masks may be used in combination with goggles to protect the mouth, nose and eyes, or a face shield may be used instead of a mask and goggles, to provide more complete protection for the face, as discussed below. **Masks should not be confused with particulate respirators that are used to prevent inhalation of small particles that may contain infectious agents transmitted via the airborne route as described below.**

The mucous membranes of the mouth, nose, and eyes are susceptible portals of entry for infectious agents, as can be other skin surfaces if skin integrity is compromised (e.g., by acne, dermatitis). Therefore, use of PPE to protect these body sites is an important component of Standard Precautions. The protective effect of masks for exposed healthcare personnel has been demonstrated. Procedures that generate splashes or sprays of blood, body fluids, secretions, or excretions (e.g., endotracheal suctioning, bronchoscopy, invasive vascular procedures) require either a face shield (disposable or reusable) or mask and goggles. The wearing of masks, eye protection, and face shields in specified circumstances when blood or body fluid exposures are likely to occur is mandated by the OSHA Blood borne Pathogens Standard. Appropriate PPE should be selected based on the anticipated level of exposure.



*Face protection: goggles/face shields*

Guidance on eye protection for infection control has been published. The eye protection chosen for specific work situations (e.g., goggles or face shield) depends upon the circumstances of exposure.

## **What is the right way to wash your hands?**



**Wet your hands** with clean, running water (warm or cold) and apply soap.

**Rub your hands** together to make a lather and scrub them well; be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

**Continue rubbing** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.

**Rinse your hands** well under running water.

**Dry your hands** using a clean towel or air dry them.

## When should you wash your hands?

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage



## What if I don't have soap and clean, running water?



Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to reduce the number of germs on them. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in some situations, but sanitizers do **not** eliminate all types of germs.

**Hand sanitizers are not as effective when hands are visibly dirty.**

### How do you use hand sanitizers?

- Apply the product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub your hands together.
- Rub the product over all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry.

# SAFETY in the LAB

## *Fall Hazards*

- Push chairs in to the table when not in use
- Clean up any spills
- Keep floor clear of any equipment when not in use
- DO NOT play on any lab stools or in any wheelchairs

## *Safety in the Kitchen*

- Always turn off the stove or oven when not in use
- Never point knives near anyone or out in space
- Never have handles hanging off the stove
- Never leave the stove unattended

## *Splinting lab precautions*

- Point the heat gun away from your body and others at all items
- Keep hair and flammables away from the heat gun
- Keep heat gun on cool or off when not in use
- NEVER reach into the splint pan; ALWAYS use spatula
- NEVER carry HOT water
- NEVER place HOT material on your partner or yourself
- Use caution when cutting splint material making sure material is at an appropriate temperature to be cut

## *Injury/illness prevention*

- Use proper body mechanics when lifting or transferring
- Notify the instructor prior of any medical conditions that may prevent you in participation in a particular lab or if in need of modifications
- Use proper hand washing techniques at all items
- Always keep cabinets, doors, and drawers closed
- Use proper PPE when applicable

## **Special Statement Regarding COVID-19 impact on the 2024-2025 School Year**

As we begin the 2024-2025 school year, we do so understanding that COVID-19 could impact the continuation and progression through the program. Although we strive to be as consistent as possible with the established policies listed in this handbook, some adjustments may be required to meet the ongoing situation. Any adjustments that are made to accommodate for COVID restrictions may impact students' ability to progress through the program in a typical manner and may result in a delayed graduation.

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**OTA INFORMATION and PROGRAM HANDBOOK RECEIPT FORM**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle Maiden

Complete Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Circle One: Land line or Cell) UA Cossatot

Alternate Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Circle One: Land line or Cell) Personal

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Relationship Phone #

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_  
Month/Day/Year

Cultural Background/Race (this information is used for data collection purposes only): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**If at any time during the year your name and/or address changes, it is your responsibility to notify Student Services and the Division of Medical Education within 72 hours of the change.**

Please read and sign the following:

I realize the above information is necessary for the instructional staff of the OTA Program and Medical Education Division, and have given it freely.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge I have received an electronic copy of the OTA Program Handbook and Policy Manual posted through Blackboard. I understand it my responsibility to ensure knowledge of and compliance with all policies contained in the handbook.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_