

Essential Functions – OTA Program

Health Professions programs establish essential functions to ensure that students have the abilities required to participate, and potentially be successful in, all aspects of the respective programs. Students are required to meet essential functions for the OTA program as indicated below. If the student is unable to meet all of the outlined standards, he/she may be withdrawn from the program.

The following essential functions outline reasonable expectations of a student in the OTA Program for the performance of common, safe classroom and clinical functions. The OTA student must be able to apply the knowledge and skills necessary to function in a variety of classroom, lab, and clinical situations while providing the essential competencies of occupational therapy intervention. These requirements apply for the purpose of admission and continuation in the program.

The student must demonstrate the following abilities:

Categories of Essential Functions	Definition	• Example of Technical Standard Ability (<i>but not limited to</i>)
Observation	Ability to participate actively in all demonstrations, laboratory exercises, experiential/ simulation, and clinical experiences in the professional program component and to assess and comprehend the condition of all clients assigned for data collection, intervention, and contribution to discharge. Such observation and information usually requires functional use of visual, auditory, somatic, and olfactory sensations.	Visual: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read print on LED display on therapeutic instruments for assessment and intervention• Visually discriminate postural, sensorimotor, musculoskeletal, and color changes• Recognize and interpret facial expressions and body language• Read paper and/or computer generated medical records• Read instrument panels and gauges• Visually monitor clients for adverse reactions to treatment• Make and record visual observations regarding functional abilities• Assess and manipulate the environment at varying distances Auditory: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receive, assess, and interpret verbal communication from clients, families, fellow students, faculty, and other members of the health care team• Respond appropriately to call bells, emergency alarms, auditory timers, and any other patient monitor• Distinguish between normal and abnormal manual blood pressure readings

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		<p>Tactile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palpate a pulse • Detect changes or abnormalities of surface texture, skin, and temperature • Assess muscle tone • Discriminate via fine touch to palpate pathologic changes in soft tissue • Palpate and manipulate bony landmarks of upper and lower extremities in preparation for activity engagement and/or data collection. <p>Olfactory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smell sufficiently to assess patient status (odors of infection, etc.) • Smell sufficiently to maintain a safe work environment
<p>Communication</p>	<p>Ability to communicate effectively in English using verbal, non-verbal, and written formats with academic and clinical faculty, students, clients, families and other members of the healthcare team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitively and effectively elicit and assess verbal and non- verbal information while engaging in intervention with clients, families, and colleagues • Recognize, interpret, and respond to non-verbal communications • Effectively articulate verbal and written information to clients, families, staff, instructors and fellow students, and other healthcare team members in both academic and clinic settings • Receive, write, and interpret written communication in both academic and clinic settings • Demonstrate active listening skills • Present and receive feedback in academic and clinical settings in a professional manner • Ability to give demonstrations or presentations to classmates, faculty, other health care workers, or at professional association meetings • Ability to independently prepare papers and reports • Ability to take written, computerized, and practical examinations • Ability to ask and respond to formal and informal questions with confidence at an appropriate professional level

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<p>Neuromusculoskeletal and Movement Related Functions</p>	<p>Sufficient ability to execute the movement and skills required for safe and effective therapeutic assessment and intervention and emergency treatment as necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to use correct grammar and spelling as well as the appropriate level of formality • Demonstrate stability, mobility, balance, strength, and agility to assist and safeguard clients during transfers and daily, relevant, meaningful activities/occupations • Be able to safely lift up to 50 lbs. while maintaining proper body mechanics • Safely lift, move, adjust, transfer, or position clients and equipment using proper body mechanics • Provide emergency treatment and follow emergency protocol both in academic and clinical settings when necessary • Sit, stand, and/or walk for sufficient periods of time to actively engage in the academic, lab, and clinical activities (may be up to 8 to 10 hours per day). • Frequently bend, crawl, squat, reach, push, and pull as required for data collection and treatment intervention • Demonstrate manual dexterity and coordination necessary to manipulate equipment and perform therapeutic procedures in such therapeutic interventions as data collection, splinting, wheelchair adjustment, feeding, managing orthotics and prosthetics etc.
<p>Intellectual</p>	<p>Ability to collect, interpret and integrate information. Ability to demonstrate clinical reasoning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read, comprehend, and retain relevant information in textbooks, class presentations, medical records, and professional literature • Integrate, retain, and synthesize information to effectively problem-solve, make decisions, plan, organize, and follow through • Exercise sound, clinical judgment and complete tasks within required time limits • Apply knowledge to both academic and clinical situations and problem solve using clinical reasoning

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize effective teaching and learning techniques and test-taking strategies • Exercise independent judgment and discretion in the performance of assigned responsibilities • Locate information using reference manuals and computer databases • Use appropriate mathematical concepts to determine standardized tests scores and understand research statistics in literature
<p>Behavioral and Social Attributes</p>	<p>Possess the emotional health and stability necessary to exercise sound clinical judgment and develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with clients, their families, and other members of the health care team.</p> <p>Possess the ability to tolerate taxing workloads, function effectively under stress, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical settings with patients.</p> <p>Possess compassion, integrity, concern for others. Demonstrate respect for academic and clinical instructors, fellow students, and other members of the health care team.</p> <p>Demonstrate professional behaviors and a strong work ethic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage time, energy, and flexibility within heavy academic schedules and deadlines in academic, clinic and home environments • Demonstrate flexibility during client, environmental, or situational change • Demonstrate emotional health needed to sustain professional behavior under physical and emotional stress • Acknowledge and respect individual values and opinions • Demonstrate sensitivity to cultural differences within academic, clinic, and community settings • Demonstrate a concern for others, interest, and motivation. • Accept responsibility and accountability for one’s own actions. • Comply with the Practice Rules and Practice Act of the Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners and the American Occupational Therapy Association’s Standards of Practice and the Code of Ethics.
<p>Technical</p>	<p>Demonstrate computer competency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize Microsoft Word and PowerPoint

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Categories of Essential Functions	Definition	• Example of Technical Standard Ability (but not limited to)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Utilize the College Learning Management System• Utilize College email system• Utilize the internet
Professional Conduct and Appearance		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain good health and self-care in order to present a well-groomed, neat appearance• Maintain patient confidentiality and exercise ethical judgment, dependability, and accountability• Demonstrate self-respect and respect for others• Display attitudes of tolerance and integrity• Display professional attributes, including punctuality, professional demeanor, and cooperation• Adhere to institutional and program policies and procedures as documented in student handbooks• Act in a manner that demonstrates awareness that a legal and binding contract exists between the academic program and the clinical site