



# SOUTH SUBURBAN COLLEGE



# OTA STUDENT HANDBOOK

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# CHAPTER 1

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## *Introduction*

Dear Occupational Therapy Assistant Students,

Welcome to the OTA program at South Suburban College!

We are glad that you have made this commitment and realize that you've worked hard to get to this point. As faculty, we want you to be successful, as you embark upon the arduous course to becoming a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant.

This handbook has been written to facilitate your introduction to the OTA Program. The following guidelines included in this student handbook are specific to the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at South Suburban College. Please be aware that any and all policies established by the college supersede OTA program guidelines. On the following pages, you will find valuable information regarding the college, the program, as well as standards, procedures and expectations that are imperative to your success as a student of the OTA Program at SSC.

Please read through this Student Handbook completely, as you will be expected to be familiar with its contents and to abide by the stated standards and procedures.

You have chosen an outstanding profession, and we look forward to working with you, as both students and as occupational therapy professionals.

All the Best,

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OTA Program Coordinator & Instructor

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# *Accreditation Statement*

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is fully accredited. The next on site visit will be scheduled during the 2027/2028 academic year.

The OTA Program is accredited by the:

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education  
(ACOTE) American Occupational Therapy Association

7501 Wisconsin Ave, Suite 510E  
Bethesda, MD 20814

301-652-6611

[accred@aota.org](mailto:accred@aota.org)

Upon successful completion of all academic and fieldwork requirements, students receive an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) Degree. Graduates of the program will be able 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) and is eligible to apply for credentialing throughout the United States.

A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT Certification exam or to obtain state licensure to practice as a COTA. Applicants are required to clear a criminal background check prior to being accepted into the OTA Program.

The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc. (NBCOT) has policies and procedures related to examination

candidates with felony convictions/charges. The certification examination application contains several questions regarding felonies. The examination application contains the following Character Review questions:

- 1a. Have you ever been convicted of a felony? (NOTE: Applicants must answer affirmatively even if convictions have been pardoned, expunged, released, or sealed.)
- b. Do you currently have a felony charge or charges against you?
- 2a. Have you ever had any professional license, registration, or certification denied, revoked, suspended, or subject to probationary conditions by a regulatory authority or certification board, including NBCOT?
- b. Do you currently have a professional license, registration, or certification under review for possible disciplinary action?
- 3a. Have you ever been found by any court, administrative, or disciplinary proceeding to have committed negligence, malpractice, recklessness, or willful or intentional misconduct which resulted in harm to another?
- b. Do you currently have a charge(s) of negligence, malpractice, recklessness, or willful or intentional misconduct that resulted in harm to another against you?
- 4a. Have you ever been suspended and/or expelled from a college or university?
- b. Are you currently under active investigation that could lead to being suspended and/or expelled from a college or university?

You can choose to undergo the character review prior to applying for the exam by requesting an Early Determination Review at <https://www.nbcot.org/exam/edr>

For further information contact NBCOT at: [info@nbcot.org](mailto:info@nbcot.org).  
National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc.  
1 Bank Street, Suite 300 Gaithersburg, MD 20878  
(301) 990-7979

# ***AOTA 2020 Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics***

## **Preamble**

The *2020 Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics* (the Code) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is designed to reflect the dynamic nature of the occupational therapy profession, the evolving health care environment, and emerging technologies that can present potential ethical concerns in practice, research, education, and policy. AOTA members are committed to promoting inclusion, participation, safety, and well-being for all recipients of service in various stages of life, health, and illness and to empowering all beneficiaries of service to meet their occupational needs. Recipients of services may be persons, groups, families, organizations, communities, or populations ([AOTA, 2020](#)).

The Code is an AOTA Official Document and a public statement tailored to address the most prevalent ethical concerns of the occupational therapy profession. It sets forth Core Values and outlines Standards of Conduct the public can expect from those in the profession. The Code applies to all occupational therapy personnel in all areas of occupational therapy and should be shared with relevant stakeholders to promote ethical conduct.

The Code serves two purposes:

It provides aspirational Core Values that guide occupational therapy personnel toward ethical courses of action in professional and volunteer roles.

It delineates ethical Principles and enforceable Standards of Conduct that apply to AOTA members.

Whereas the Code helps guide and define decision-making parameters, ethical action goes beyond rote compliance with these Principles and is a manifestation of moral character and mindful reflection. Adherence to the Code is a commitment to benefit others, to the virtuous practice of artistry and science, to genuinely good behaviors, and to noble acts of courage. Recognizing and resolving ethical issues is a systematic process that includes analyzing the complex dynamics of situations, applying moral theories and weighing alternatives, making reasoned decisions, taking action, and reflecting on outcomes. Occupational

therapy personnel are expected to abide by the Principles and Standards of Conduct within this Code.

The process for addressing ethics violations by AOTA members (and associate members, where applicable) is outlined in the Code's Enforcement Procedures ([AOTA, 2019](#)).

Although many state regulatory boards incorporate the Code or similar language regarding ethical behavior into regulations, the Code is meant to be a freestanding document that guides ethical dimensions of professional behavior, responsibility, practice, and decision making. This Code is not exhaustive; that is, the Principles and Standards of Conduct cannot address every possible situation. Therefore, before making complex ethical decisions that require further expertise, occupational therapy personnel should seek out resources to assist with resolving conflicts and ethical issues not addressed in this document. Resources can include, but are not limited to, ethics committees, organizational ethics officers or consultants, and the AOTA Ethics Commission. For a full list of AOTA ethics resources, please refer to the AOTA website at <https://www.aota.org/Practice/Ethics.aspx>.

## Core Values

The occupational therapy profession is grounded in seven longstanding Core Values: Altruism, Equality, Freedom, Justice, Dignity, Truth, and Prudence (AOTA, 1993). The seven Core Values provide a foundation to guide occupational therapy personnel in their interactions with others. These Core Values should be considered when determining the most ethical course of action (adapted from *Core Values and Attitudes of Occupational Therapy Practice*; AOTA, 1993):

*Altruism* indicates demonstration of unselfish concern for the welfare of others. Occupational therapy personnel reflect this concept in actions and attitudes of commitment, caring, dedication, responsiveness, and understanding.

*Equality* indicates that all persons have fundamental human rights and the right to the same opportunities. Occupational therapy personnel demonstrate this value by maintaining an attitude of fairness and impartiality and treating all persons in a way that is free of bias. Personnel should recognize their own biases and respect all persons, keeping in mind that others may have values, beliefs, or lifestyles that differ from their own. Equality applies to the professional arena as well as to recipients of occupational therapy services.



*Freedom* indicates valuing each person's right to exercise autonomy and demonstrate independence, initiative, and self-direction. A person's occupations play a major role in their development of self-direction, initiative, interdependence, and ability to adapt and relate to the world. Occupational therapy personnel affirm the autonomy of each individual to pursue goals that have personal and social meaning. Occupational therapy personnel value the service recipient's right and desire to guide interventions.

*Justice* indicates that occupational therapy personnel provide occupational therapy services for all persons in need of these services and maintain a goal-directed and objective relationship with recipients of service. Justice places value on upholding moral and legal principles and on having knowledge of and respect for the legal rights of recipients of service. Occupational therapy personnel must understand and abide by local, state, and federal laws governing professional practice. Justice is the pursuit of a state in which diverse communities are inclusive and are organized and structured so that all members can function, flourish, and live a satisfactory life regardless of age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, origin, socioeconomic status, degree of ability, or any other status or attributes. Occupational therapy personnel, by virtue of the specific nature of the practice of occupational therapy, have a vested interest in *social justice*: addressing unjust inequities that limit opportunities for participation in society (Ashe, 2016; Braveman & Bass-Haugen, 2009). They also exhibit attitudes and actions consistent with *occupational justice*: full inclusion in everyday meaningful occupations for persons, groups, or populations (Scott et al., 2017).

*Dignity* indicates the importance of valuing, promoting, and preserving the inherent worth and uniqueness of each person. This value includes respecting the person's social and cultural heritage and life experiences. Exhibiting attitudes and actions of dignity requires occupational therapy personnel to act in ways consistent with cultural sensitivity, humility, and agility.

*Truth* indicates that occupational therapy personnel in all situations should be faithful to facts and reality. Truthfulness, or veracity, is demonstrated by being accountable, honest, forthright, accurate, and authentic in attitudes and actions. Occupational therapy personnel have an obligation to be truthful with themselves, recipients of service, colleagues, and society. Truth **includes** maintaining and upgrading professional competence and being truthful in oral, written, and electronic communications.

*Prudence* indicates the ability to govern and discipline oneself through the use of reason. To be prudent is to value judiciousness, discretion, vigilance, moderation, care, and circumspection in the management of one's own affairs and to temper extremes, make judgments, and respond on the basis of intelligent reflection and rational thought. Prudence must be exercised in clinical and ethical reasoning, interactions with colleagues, and volunteer roles.

## Principles

The *principles* guide ethical decision making and inspire occupational therapy personnel to act in accordance with the highest ideals. These Principles are not hierarchically organized. At times, conflicts between competing principles must be considered in order to make ethical decisions. These Principles may need to be carefully balanced and weighed according to professional values, individual and cultural beliefs, and organizational policies.

### Principle 1. Beneficence

Occupational therapy personnel shall demonstrate a concern for the well-being and safety of persons.

The Principle of *Beneficence* includes all forms of action intended to benefit other persons. The term *beneficence* has historically indicated acts of mercy, kindness, and charity (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019). Beneficence requires taking action to benefit others—in other words, to promote good, to prevent harm, and to remove harm (Doherty & Purtilo, 2016). Examples of Beneficence include protecting and defending the rights of others, preventing harm from occurring to others, removing conditions that will cause harm to others, offering services that benefit persons with disabilities, and acting to protect and remove persons from dangerous situations (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019).

### Principle 2. Nonmaleficence

Occupational therapy personnel shall refrain from actions that cause harm.

The Principle of *Nonmaleficence* indicates that occupational therapy personnel must refrain from causing harm, injury, or wrongdoing to recipients of service. Whereas Beneficence requires taking action to incur benefit, Nonmaleficence requires avoiding actions that cause harm (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019). The Principle of Nonmaleficence also includes an obligation not to impose risks of harm even if the potential risk is without malicious or harmful intent. This Principle is often examined in the context of *due care*, which requires that the

benefits of care outweigh and justify the risks undertaken to achieve the goals of care (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019). For example, an occupational therapy intervention might require the service recipient to invest a great deal of time and perhaps even discomfort; however, the time and discomfort are justified by potential long-term, evidence-based benefits of the treatment.

### **Principle 3. Autonomy**

Occupational therapy personnel shall respect the right of the person to self-determination, privacy, confidentiality, and consent.

The Principle of *Autonomy* expresses the concept that occupational therapy personnel have a duty to treat the client or service recipient according to their desires, within the bounds of accepted standards of care, and to protect their confidential information. Often, respect for Autonomy is referred to as the *self-determination principle*. Respecting the Autonomy of service recipients acknowledges their agency, including their right to their own views and opinions and their right to make choices in regard to their own care and based on their own values and beliefs (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019). For example, persons have the right to make a determination regarding care decisions that directly affect their lives. In the event that a person lacks decision-making capacity, their Autonomy should be respected through the involvement of an authorized agent or surrogate decision maker.

### **Principle 4. Justice**

Occupational therapy personnel shall promote equity, inclusion, and objectivity in the provision of occupational therapy services

The Principle of *Justice* relates to the fair, equitable, and appropriate treatment of persons (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019). Occupational therapy personnel demonstrate attitudes and actions of respect, inclusion, and impartiality toward persons, groups, and populations with whom they interact, regardless of age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, origin, socioeconomic status, degree of ability, or any other status or attributes. Occupational therapy personnel also respect the applicable laws and standards related to their area of practice. Justice requires the impartial consideration and consistent observance of policies to generate unbiased decisions. For example, occupational therapy personnel work to create and uphold a society in which all persons have equitable opportunity for full inclusion in meaningful occupational engagement as an essential component of their lives.

## Principle 5. Veracity

Occupational therapy personnel shall provide comprehensive, accurate, and objective information when representing the profession.

The Principle of *Veracity* refers to comprehensive, accurate, and objective transmission of information and includes fostering understanding of such information. Veracity is based on the virtues of truthfulness, candor, honesty, and respect owed to others (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019). In communicating with others, occupational therapy personnel implicitly promise to be truthful and not deceptive. For example, when entering into a therapeutic or research relationship, the service recipient or research participant has a right to accurate information. In addition, transmission of information must include means to ensure that the recipient or participant understands the information provided.

## Principle 6. Fidelity

Occupational therapy personnel shall treat clients (persons, groups, or populations), colleagues, and other professionals with respect, fairness, discretion, and integrity.

The Principle of *Fidelity* refers to the duty one has to keep a commitment once it is made (Veatch et al., 2015). This commitment refers to promises made between a provider and a client, as well as maintenance of respectful collegial and organizational relationships (Doherty & Purtilo, 2016). Professional relationships are greatly influenced by the complexity of the environment in which occupational therapy personnel work. For example, occupational therapy personnel should consistently balance their duties to service recipients, students, research participants, and other professionals, as well as to organizations that may influence decision making and professional practice.

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Revised by the AOTA Ethics Commission, 2020

Adopted by the Representative Assembly, November 2020

Note. This revision replaces the 2015 document Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics (2015), previously published and copyrighted in 2015 by the American Occupational Therapy Association in the American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 69, 6913410030. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2015.69S03>

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## CHAPTER 2

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### *Mission Statements*

#### **South Suburban College Mission Statement**

The mission of South Suburban College is to Serve our Students and the Community through lifelong learning.

#### **OTA Program Mission Statement**

The mission of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at South Suburban College is to serve our students by providing a quality and personally challenging educational experience while preparing for employment as entry level occupational therapy practitioners in a variety of diverse and challenging healthcare and social environments. The program provides students with the essential personal, professional technical and clinical reasoning skills to effectively practice as entry level Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants by providing a **Process** that emphasizes ethical, client centered and evidence-based practice rooted in core values and lifelong learning. The **Process** embraces a diverse student population to facilitate a learning community that reflects a culturally diverse society and an appreciation of individual's unique set of circumstances to successfully engage in purposeful and meaningful occupations.

This mission is accomplished through:

- Recognizing and utilizing the diverse attributes and talents of the SSC student population to foster the provision of occupational therapy services in an ever changing diverse socioeconomic and cultural healthcare, vocational and educational environment
- Preparing the students for entry-level employment, certification and state licensure/registration
- Encouraging students to take personal responsibility in the areas of psychosocial and physical health, wellness and prevention of occupational dysfunction

- Providing students with the interpersonal and technical skills necessary to Collaborate with the occupational therapist and other members of the healthcare/educational team in providing occupational therapy services that reflect the profession's standards and ethics
- Preparing graduates to address and respond to new challenges within the field of Occupational Therapy and healthcare in general by recognizing the need for involvement in professional and civic organizations that promote and support the field of Occupational Therapy.

## ***Program Philosophical Statements***

### **Philosophy Statement**

In keeping with the fundamental belief that purposeful activity can improve an individual's health and ability to carry-out occupational roles. We believe that human beings learn best by doing! The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at SSC utilizes the model of Occupational Performance as the frame of reference. Occupational Performance is composed of, activities of daily living, work & productive activities, and play & leisure activities, which are all dependent upon performance skills. Underlying skills such as motor, sensory-integrative, cognitive, psychological and social functioning directly impact occupational performance. The OTA curriculum engages the learner in an active process of exploring each of these skills on a continuum that is from, normal to abnormal, typical to atypical, function to dysfunction and simple to complex. We facilitate the learning process by assisting the learner in translating the knowledge they gain in the program into the skills they need, in the role of Occupational Therapy Assistants.

### **Educational Philosophy**

The South Suburban College (SSC) Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) curriculum is designed to reflect the mission of the College, the mission of the OTA Department and to reflect the foundation and future of the profession of Occupational Therapy. The educational philosophy of the core faculty at SSC is integral to the overall success of the program and its students. Drawing from principles of adult learning theory (Lieb, 1991) and Bruner (Smith, 2002), the faculty provide

learning experiences that engages the student in an active Process of self-discovery and personal growth while acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills to provide occupational therapy interventions grounded in fundamental concepts of human occupation. Learning in the OTA program occurs in a spiral fashion where previously learned information is integrated and built upon to develop students' abilities to problem solve *think like a practitioner*. Material is presented by the instructors through a variety of methodologies to ensure that all types of learners, whether visual, auditory or kinesthetic have an opportunity to grasp the necessary concepts and progress through the program. The numerous years of clinical and academic experience of the core faculty members facilitates a learning experience that is built on mutual respect and trust of the Process, adaptation, flexibility and professionalism. The rigor of the program coupled with the student's personal resources, diversity and contexts provide daily real-life challenges and learning opportunities as students learn firsthand the effects of stress, health and wellness on occupational performance.



# *Program Curriculum Design & Objectives*

## **The Educational Objectives of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program**

### **Students will**

- Develop a foundation of fundamental concepts basic and knowledge rich in the science and art of practice.
- Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills, including professional writing, verbal communication, technology, interpretation and use of professional literature, and interactions with others.
- Demonstrate a thorough understanding of human occupation and the occupational nature of human beings utilizing self-reflection, occupational theories and the use of the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework as a foundation for the domain and process of occupational therapy.
- Demonstrate an appreciation of the history, core values, ethics and concepts of occupational therapy practice.
- Demonstrate task analysis, clinical reasoning and critical thinking skills to identify problems and implement therapeutic interventions and solutions for individuals based on purposeful and meaningful activities.
- Demonstrate competency in the articulation of the essence of client centered occupational therapy to pertinent client and external audiences.
- Develop an appreciation and utilization of scholarly work to provide the necessary tools for evidence-based practice in the treatment of clients, in collaboration with occupational therapists and other professions and agencies in the delivery of occupational therapy services.
- Provide opportunities and exploration of emerging areas of practice.

- Develop professional leadership, behaviors, values and ethics congruent with the philosophy and vision of the profession as well as an appreciation of the culturally, socially and politically diverse environments and populations' occupational therapy serves.
- Prepare students for entry level employment and continually assess outcomes of the educational program through comprehensive program evaluation that incorporates both internal and external resources.

To facilitate student success in the OTA program, students are required to meet with OTA program faculty at least one time during the semester to discuss and review their progress related to fieldwork, and coursework. This allows for student advising and one-on-one time with faculty to discuss any student concerns. Students may arrange additional time with faculty members on an as needed basis, for assistance throughout the program. Students will be provided with office hours for all faculty members at the start of each semester to aid with scheduling meeting times, and a Student Update form and/or signature/date on the Fieldwork History form will be completed as documentation of the meetings occurrence.

## **Curricular Threads**

The curriculum is designed to meet these objectives through the following curricular threads interwoven throughout coursework and experiential learning experiences.

- Basic tenets of occupation therapy practice
- Clinical reasoning
- Experiential Learning
- Fundamental concepts and skills.
- Occupation-based intervention and implementation
- Professional leadership, lifelong learning and advocacy
- Professional literature and evidence- based practice
- Theoretical concepts

## **General Education And Prerequisite Coursework Fulfill Identified Objectives/Threads As Follows**

1. The building of basic knowledge of the human mind and body structure occur with the prerequisite and general education courses in the biological and social sciences. (Biology 185 & 186, Psychology 101 & 206). These courses provide a foundation for understanding function and dysfunction from a biological, physiological, psychological and cultural perspective and the subsequent impact on occupational performance.
2. Basic communication skills and critical skills in listening, reading and thinking are developed in coursework from Medical Terminology 102, English 101, and Speech 108.
3. A hands-on art class facilitates a student's ability to analyze, interpret and appreciate aesthetic reasoning and creative expression.
4. Collectively these courses form a majority of the Fundamental concepts and skills thread necessary for rigorous study and to lay the foundation for the OTA curriculum.

## **Occupational Therapy Assistant Coursework Fulfillment Of Program Goals**

The underlying content of the OTA curriculum emphasizes the profession's holistic approach to support individual's engagement in purposeful activity and occupations as a means to enhance, develop and restore meaningful and desired life roles. (Basic Tenets) Content and activities in prerequisite introductory coursework (OTA 101) provide an overview of the profession's historical roots, core values, philosophy and organization as well as establishing the initial footing for the foundation by laying out the domain and tenets of purposeful activity, human occupation, and task analysis. (Basic Tenets) Students are also introduced to professional terminology, literature, writing and oral presentation as well as the therapeutic use of self and exploration of the roles and responsibilities of occupational therapy practitioners in various disability and treatment areas (Basic Tenets, Professional Ethics & Professional literature and Evidence-Based Practice Threads).

The OTA professional program starts in the fall semester, and consists of four core courses taken simultaneously (OTA 102,103,105 and 108) that form the cornerstones of the curriculum (Theoretical

Perspectives, Basic Tenets, Professional Literature, Intervention and Implementation Threads). Fundamentals of Occupational Therapy (OTA 102) and Foundations of Occupational Therapy (OTA 108) build upon the basic knowledge of the Introduction to Occupational Therapy (OTA 101) course by utilizing the concepts of the occupational nature of individuals and the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework to examine the impact that physical ability and disability have on the individual. These courses assist the student in their ability to utilize the vernacular of the profession, analyze tasks, identify deficits in performance skills and occupations, plan appropriate treatment interventions and adaptations, comprehend the nature of disability and the various contexts and factors that impede occupational performance, adaptation and life role satisfaction.

Concurrently, Practice Skills and Techniques I (OTA 103) and Occupational Therapy Interactions (OTA 105), examine assessments, analysis and intervention in occupational performance as well as the principles of human interactions and problem-solving techniques for developing therapeutic relationships and use of self. Experiential activities, lab practicums and Level I fieldwork (OTA 104) provide the student with opportunities to integrate knowledge, develop professional reasoning and behavior skills as well as provide hands-on applications through classroom, healthcare and community service agencies.

In the second semester, learning progresses as previous knowledge is built upon with coursework that encompasses the theory, assessment and treatment in areas of developmental, psychosocial and physical dysfunction (OTA 201, 202, 203, & 210.) The use of evidence-based practice through journal review and case studies as well as continued interplay of laboratory, role play, demonstration, fieldwork and community experiences in dyadic and group formats further develop the student's knowledge and professional reasoning for planning and intervention. Students during the OTA 202 and OTA 203 coursework apply previously learned concepts in all areas of practice by developing strategies and interventions throughout the continuum with an emphasis on client centered purpose activity. (Basic Tenets, Professional literature, Intervention & Implementation, Clinical Reasoning, Experiential Learning, Professional Ethics, Values and Responsibilities Threads)

As a capstone to the educational component of the OTA curriculum, the student prepares to assume their role as a future occupational

therapy assistant examining professional issues related to occupational therapy including: documentation, reimbursement, management skills, outcomes assessment, supervision issues, ethics, credentialing, leadership and advocacy (OTA 205-Professional Issues in Occupational Therapy). Additionally, students explore and implement psychosocial practices in emerging areas of practice and complete their coursework with a final research paper espousing the importance and need for psychosocial occupational therapy in a variety of nontraditional settings (OTA 201).

## **The Role of Fieldwork Education in Meeting Objectives**

Fieldwork education is an integral part of the South Suburban College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program curriculum design. The OTA program provides Level I and Level II fieldwork experience in a variety of settings. There are over 50 fieldwork sites which encompass a variety of practice areas throughout the south suburban and northwest Indiana region. Sites are selected to match the interests and needs of each individual student. As students' progress through the program, problem-based learning serves as a foundation for the development of clinical skills. Lectures, case studies, role play and demonstrations specific to areas of dysfunction further the students' knowledge and strategies for occupational therapy intervention. Laboratory experiences provide the opportunity for students to practice skills and develop components of the occupational therapy process. Level I Fieldwork provides the OTA student opportunities to observe the occupational therapy process within varied settings and students begin to transfer didactic learning to practice.

## **Program Evaluation and Outcomes Assessment**

The ultimate goal of occupational education as defined by the State of Illinois is to prepare individuals who are capable of securing and maintaining employment. In support of this goal, SSC and the OTA program strive to provide quality educational programs that prepare for competitive work and successfully meet the diverse needs of the students and community they serve. To ensure that this goal is attained, a comprehensive review process has been established and implemented. This systematic process focuses on student outcomes through the OTA Program of Study and South Suburban College's Outcome Assessment Program. Included are curriculum validation with input from Advisory Committee members, employers, faculty, preceptors, students and

graduates as well as surveys of their employers and performance on the NBCOT examination. In addition, the criteria for successful completion of the educational program, for graduation and the conferring of the Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degrees are published in the College Catalog and are monitored by the counseling department.

## Curriculum Course Sequence

### Occupational Therapy Assistant Degree (OTA.AAS)

Overview for College Success	Overview for College Success (OCS 121) is a class that will help you plan and assist you in becoming a better student and support you in your work/ life balance. OCS 121 credit is not calculated in the course minimum credit totals listed in this section.	
OCS 121	Overview for College Success	1
<b>Prerequisites for Admission to the OTA Program</b>		<b>Credits</b>
BIO 185	Human Anatomy & Physiology I	4
OTA 101	Introduction to Occupational Therapy	3
PSY 101	Introduction to Psychology	3
ART 112 ART 110 ART 109	Three-Dimensional Design OR Metals and Jewelry OR Ceramics I	3
<b>General Education Requirements</b>		<b>Credits</b>
ENG 101	Composition & Rhetoric	3
PSY 206 PSY 211	Abnormal Psychology OR Human Growth & Development	3
BIO 186	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4
SPE 108	Oral Communication	3
HIT 102	Fundamentals of Medical Terminology	1

*Once admitted, students must complete a physical and submit to a criminal background check. All students must be certified in CPR and hold a current card throughout the entire program.*

## Professional/Career Education Requirements

Fall Semester		Credits
OTA 102	Fundamentals of Occupational Therapy	4
OTA 103	Practice Skills & Techniques I	4
OTA 104	Occupational Therapy Fieldwork I	2
OTA 105	Occupational Therapy Interactions	2
OTA 108	Foundations of Occupational Therapy	2
Spring Semester		Credits
OTA 201	Principles of Psychosocial Dysfunction	3
OTA 202	Principles of Physical Dysfunction	4
OTA 203	Principles of Developmental Dysfunction	4
OTA 204	Occupational Therapy Fieldwork II	2
OTA 210	Practice Skills & Techniques II	3
Fall Semester		Credits
OTA 205	Professional Issues in OT	2
OTA 212	Occupational Therapy Internship I	5
OTA 213	Occupational Therapy Internship II	5
Total Program Credit Hours		69

## Curriculum Course Descriptions

### OTA 101—Introduction to Occupational Therapy (Fall, Spring, Summer)

Overview of the profession of occupational therapy with an emphasis on its history, philosophy, and the nature of occupation. Explore the role of occupational therapy practitioners in various practice settings.

### OTA 108—Foundations of Occupational Therapy (Fall)

This course is one of the first courses of the OTA program and is an overview of philosophies of occupational therapy and the occupational therapy framework. The course serves as a foundation for clinical practice in the areas of analysis of activity, occupational performance and philosophy, motor learning and the group process.

## **OTA 102—Fundamentals of Occupational Therapy (Fall)**

The study of occupational performance/roles and its effect on individual who have had a physical disability. Lab experiences include training in adaptive activities of daily living, evaluation and mechanics of the wheelchair, accessibility issues and transferring techniques.

## **OTA 103—Practice Skills and Techniques I (Fall)**

The role of the OTA in the application of various assessments utilized during the occupational therapy process. Emphasis on various treatment methods and techniques used in the occupational therapy intervention for problems identified from the assessment data. These methods and techniques will be discussed and demonstrated.

## **OTA 104—Occupational Therapy Fieldwork I (Fall)**

This level I fieldwork experience introduces the student to health care and community service agencies. Includes placement in various practice settings for orientation and observation the occupational therapy process and the role of the OTA. Emphasis is based on adult physical dysfunction.

## **OTA 105—Occupational Therapy Interactions (Fall)**

Principles of human interactions and problem-solving techniques for developing therapeutic relationships are introduced in this course. Concepts such as therapeutic use of self, stress management techniques and communication/rapport are discussed and practiced.

## **OTA 201—Principles of Psychosocial Dysfunction (Spring)**

Theory and techniques of occupational therapy with individuals who have been diagnosed with a mental illness. Occupational therapy techniques such as, the group process and purposeful activities are emphasized. Experiences with group development and implementation will be stressed in the course, on fieldwork and in the community.

## **OTA 202—Principles of Physical Dysfunction (Spring)**

Theory and techniques of occupational therapy with individuals who have had a medical, neurological or orthopedic condition. Emphasis will be placed on occupational therapy intervention, activities of daily living, and adaptation of tasks for the conditions listed above.



### **OTA 203—Principles of Developmental Dysfunction (Spring)**

Theory and techniques of occupational therapy in medical, neurological or orthopedic conditions affecting children, with emphasis on normal development, family roles, activities of daily living, and adaptation. Emphasis will be place on effected occupational therapy treatment intervention for the conditions listed above.

### **OTA 204—Occupational Therapy Fieldwork II (Spring)**

This level I fieldwork experience introduces the student to health care and community service agencies. Includes placement in various practice settings for orientation and observation the occupational therapy process and the role of the OTA. Emphasis is based on developmental dysfunction and mental illness.

### **OTA 210—Practice Skills and Techniques II (Spring)**

An introduction to therapeutic activities, with concentration on the ability to analyze activities, the group process and methods of instruction/teaching. Emphasis will be on the occupational therapy group process and the student's ability to identify the purpose of therapeutic activities in occupational therapy intervention.

### **OTA 205—Professional Issues in Occupational Therapy (Fall)**

Professional issues related to occupational therapy including: documentation, reimbursement, management skills, quality assurance, supervision issues, occupational therapy ethics and the credentialing process are addressed in this course.

## CHAPTER 4

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### *General Information: Policies & Procedures*

Occupational therapy is a widely varying field of practice that includes a set of skills that differ from one job to another. Individuals with many different traits can succeed in the field of occupational therapy.

Occupational therapy assistants work with individuals with many different kinds of disabilities. Occupational therapy assistants must have a deep commitment to serving the needs of persons of all ages with all types of disabilities.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant curriculum at South Suburban College educates and trains students as generalist practitioners and follows the requirements of the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). Students who complete South Suburban College's OTA program are prepared for employment in all areas of the practice, and possess the skills needed to succeed in clinical training and practice and for the required certification exam.

Students are required to comply with all SSC Code of Conduct which can be found at [SSC 2024-26 Catalog](#) pages 3-5.

Additionally, OTA students are required to comply with the OTA Student Handbook and meet the following requirements:

- A.** Ability to participate in lab activities requiring hands on contact with classmates and instructors in various stages of moderate undress to prepare for clinical training
- B.** Ability to speak and understand the English language at a level consistent with competent professional practice
- C.** Ability to observe and interpret signs and symptoms through vision, hearing and touch. Students must possess functional use of the senses permitting such observation
- D.** Ability to utilize hand and mechanical tools safely and effectively
- E.** Ability to maintain sufficient postural and neuromuscular control, sensory function and coordination to safely and accurately provide assessment and remediation
- F.** Ability to demonstrate the use of accepted techniques

accurately and safely when using professional equipment and materials

- G. Ability to participate in physical activity involving lifting of approximately 50 lbs., bending, moving and supporting others
- H. Ability to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds including, but is not limited to, the ability to establish rapport with patients and communicate judgments and treatment information effectively; with appropriate confidentiality
- I. Ability to demonstrate appropriate behaviors and skills in classroom and fieldwork in interactions with faculty, other students, fieldwork coordinator, fieldwork supervisors and professional colleagues
- J. Ability to demonstrate the capacity to assimilate, analyze, synthesize, integrate concepts and problem solve to formulate assessments and therapeutic judgments and be able to distinguish deviations from the norm in self and others

*Additional standards for performance are outlined in the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation, which is available from the Occupational Therapy Department.*

*Evaluation is completed by faculty, fieldwork supervisors and fieldwork coordinator, as appropriate.*

## **Fieldwork Availability**

Many of the standards set forth above are required at fieldwork sites. There is however, a wide variability among site requirements and necessary skills according to the needs of patients and clients at the particular facility.

South Suburban College and the OTA program make every attempt to accommodate student needs. Due to the varying site-specific requirements, accommodations may not be universally available.

Persons with specific disabilities are advised to bring their special needs to the attention of the South Suburban College Disability Support Services and the Occupational Therapy Assistant Academic Fieldwork Coordinator to discuss the likely availability of special fieldwork accommodation. Disclosure of disabling conditions to fieldwork sites is the responsibility of the student. Only then can accommodation be discussed. A realistic assessment will be made of the student's likelihood to succeed in the program.

## **Standards for Students with Disabilities**

South Suburban College is committed to the education of all qualified individuals, including persons with disabilities who, with or without reasonable accommodation, are capable of performing the essential functions of the educational program in which they are enrolled and the profession that they pursue.

It is the policy of South Suburban College to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1973, and state and local requirements regarding students and applicants with disabilities. Under these laws otherwise qualified and competent individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in services, programs, and activities solely on the basis of the disability.

South Suburban College makes every effort to meet the needs of occupational therapy assistant students with disabilities. Accommodations will be made within the parameters of the academic educational program and fieldwork availability.

## ***Essential Functions and Technical Standards for Enrollment***

The following standards are described to assist each candidate in evaluating his/her prospect for academic and clinical success. When a student's ability to perform is compromised, the student must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to perform the essential functions described.

It is important to read each standard carefully. By signing below, the student is indicating that s/he has read and understands these standards.

### **Observation Skills:**

Students must be able to acquire a defined level of required information as presented through educational experiences in both basic arts and sciences and clinical sciences. To achieve the required competencies in the classroom setting, students must perceive, assimilate, and integrate information from a variety of sources, including oral presentation, printed material, visual media, and live demonstrations. Consequently, students must demonstrate adequate functional use of visual, tactile,

auditory and other sensory and perceptual modalities for academic and clinical performance.

### **Communication Skills:**

Effective communication is critical for students to build relationships with faculty, fellow students, coworkers, clients, and client's significant others in the student's various roles of learner, colleague, and leader. Students must be able to gather, comprehend, utilize and disseminate information effectively, efficiently and according to professional standards. Students are required to communicate in the English language, both verbally and in writing, at a level consistent with competent professional practice. Students are expected to use grammar and vocabulary proficiently. Students must be able to elicit information, gather information, and describe findings verbally and in writing (e.g., in a physical examination record and treatment plan). This communication should be understandable by patients, professionals, and lay-persons.

Students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds.

Students must have the ability to establish rapport with patients and effectively communicate judgments and treatment information. Students should also be able to observe, recognize and understand non-verbal behavior.

### **Intellectual/Conceptual Abilities:**

Students must demonstrate critical thinking skills to problem-solve creatively, master abstract ideas, and synthesize information presented in academic, laboratory and fieldwork settings. Students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, process, integrate, synthesize, apply and retain facts, concepts, and data related to the art and science of health care. These skills may require understanding of three-dimensional relationships and understanding of the spatial relationships of structures. Students are expected to develop and exhibit a sense of medical ethics; and the ability to recognize and apply appropriate legal and ethical standards of the profession. The necessary skills will be evaluated through oral, written and practical examinations and demonstrations.

## **Motor Skills:**

Success in the OTA program requires students to possess the motor functions needed to manipulate tools or handle clients. The necessary motor capacities typically include physical strength and coordination to safely handle and move individuals, ability to perform medical procedures, and the ability to direct clients in various practice settings according to the client's needs. Additional necessary motor functions will vary depending on the particular program or placement.

## **Behavioral and Social Skills:**

Students must demonstrate emotional stability, acceptable communication skills, and be capable of developing mature and effective interpersonal relationships with other students and health care workers. Students will be required to undertake physically and emotionally taxing workloads and are expected to function effectively under stress.

Students must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and function in the face of the uncertainties inherent in the clinical setting.

Students must exhibit the ability and commitment to work with all individuals without bias. Clients may be severely injured, may be limited by cognitive, emotional and functional deficits, and may exhibit behavior that causes an aversive reaction. The ability to interact with these individuals without being judgmental or prejudiced is critical in establishing a professional and therapeutic relationship. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are critical to complete the OTA program.

## **Professional Responsibility**

Students must be trained for emergencies and shall exhibit the ability to meet the challenges of any medical situation requiring a readiness for immediate and appropriate response without interference of personal or medical problems.

Each student is responsible for attending classes and clinical assignments on time, and demonstrating the organizational skills and stamina for performing required tasks and assignments within allotted time frames.

Students are required to follow the policies of the College, the OTA program, and clinical sites.

Students are expected to take initiative to direct their own learning. Cooperative and collaborative work with other students on assigned projects is expected. Students are expected to participate willingly in a supervisory process involving evaluation-of abilities and reasoning skills.

## References

Gleeson, P.B., & Utsey. ;( 2000). Manual for the PT and PTA ACCE.Texas Consortium for Physical Therapy Clinical Education.

Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in Athletic Training (2000) Guidelines for technical standards for entry-level athletic training education.

Scott, S., Wells, S. Hanebrink, S. (1999) Educating College Students with Disabilities: What Academic & Fieldwork Educators Need to Know. Bethesda, MD: -AOTA, Inc.

University of Medicine and Dentistry. New Jersey (2000) Essential technical Standards for Physician Assistant students

# **South Suburban College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Standards For Essential Functions**

## **Certification Statement**

- I believe to the best of my knowledge that I am able to meet each of these standards with or without reasonable accommodation. I understand that if I am unable to meet these standards, I may not be able to continue in the Occupational Therapy Assistant program.
- I certify that I have read and understand the Standards for Essential Functions both for the South Suburban College and for my specific program of study in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. I believe to the best of my knowledge that I can meet each of these standards with or without reasonable accommodations. I will contact the South Suburban College Disability Support Services to determine what accommodations may be necessary and available.
- I understand that if I am unable to meet these standards with or without reasonable accommodations, I may not be able to continue in the Occupational Therapy Assistant program.

**Student has visited DSS** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Initials)**

**Print Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_



## ***Program Progression and Graduation:***

Because the OTA program is part of the credentialing process to become a professional occupational therapy assistant, progression requirements go beyond the academic standards associated with degree completion and include expectations regarding professional behaviors and successful demonstration of therapeutic skills.

1. All prerequisite and general education coursework must be completed prior to starting the OTA program
2. There are progression requirements for the Associate in Applied Science (AAS) Degree at SSC which must be maintained for a student to be considered in good standing. Refer to the [SSC 2024-26 Catalog](#) pages 20-21. Students who do not meet SSC's academic standards will be dismissed from the college as noted in the catalog. Dismissal from the college results in an automatic dismissal from the OTA Program.
3. All paperwork (physicals, insurance, CPR cards, etc.) must be completed by the designated dates.
4. Criminal Background checks must be completed prior to the start of level I fieldwork. Many fieldwork sites also require toxicology screenings. The cost of both the background check and toxicology screening are the responsibility of the student.
5. Students who achieve below a "C" in any occupational therapy assistant course will be terminated from the program with the option to reapply. Readmission is not automatic. A grade of "D" or "F" requires that the course be repeated.
6. Courses within the OTA curriculum may have higher grade requirements. These will be published in the course syllabus and must be met in order for students to progress within the curriculum.
7. Students must maintain satisfactory professional behaviors in all classes and field work. Documentation of unsatisfactory ratings of professional behaviors in two or more semesters can be grounds for dismissal from the program.
8. Students must demonstrate behaviors consistent with the professional practice of occupational therapy as described in the AOTA Code of Ethics.

9. Students will attend Program Orientation at the beginning of the program to review the Student Handbook, familiarize themselves with program policies and procedures as well as discuss program progression, completion guidelines and graduation requirements.
10. Each student must meet with OTA program faculty prior to registration for the next semester courses, with one mandatory advising session each semester as the student progresses through the program sequence.
11. Students must schedule their initial advisement appointment at the beginning of each semester.
12. All academic coursework must be completed within 24 months. All Level II internships must be completed within 18 months of academic preparation.

## Course Requirements:

*Each of the courses within the OTA program must be passed with a "C" or better.*

*Level II internships are completed on a pass/fail basis.*

Attendance must conform to the OTA attendance policy.

Any conduct that is in violation of the South Suburban College, Code of Conduct (SSC Catalog) will be automatically dismissed from the class and will receive a failing grade.

Final grades are an accumulation of total points for the semester.

Grades will be determined on the following scale:

- A. 93
- B. 85
- C. 78
- D. 70

Make-up examinations will be considered only under extreme circumstances where a student's absence is unavoidable. Students will be excused from taking an examination at the scheduled time in the case of severe illness (a physician's note is required) and a death in the immediate family. Any other circumstances will be dealt with on an individual basis; a loss of one letter grade may be given for the missed exam. The student must contact the instructor within 24 hours if a problem arises and conflicts with an examination.

All examinations must be made up prior to the next class period.

FOR EXAMPLE: If the course meets on Tuesday and Thursday and the examination is given on Tuesday, you **MUST** make the examination up prior to Thursday.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule the make-up exam with the appropriate instructor. All make-up examinations will lose one letter grade.

All assignments must be turned in at the start of each class period. **No email assignments will be accepted.** If the assignment is not turned in at the start of the class the assignment is subject to a loss of 10 points. Any assignment that is turned in late is subject to the assignment policy procedure, regardless of the reason for the late work.

It is the student's responsibility to obtain class notes and assignments if absent.

## CHAPTER 5

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# Attendance Policy

## SSC Attendance Policy

[SSC 2024-26 Catalog pages 29-30](#)

*Attendance and promptness are MANDATORY for successful completion of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program.*

## Absences & Tardiness

The classroom will be locked at the start of each class session. Any student who is not present at the start of class will be considered late. If an examination/quiz is being given, the student will not receive additional time for the examination and will incur an automatic 10-point deduction.

A total of 4 class absences, class tardiness and/or instances of leaving early within a semester is considered unacceptable.

Absences, class tardiness and/or instances of leaving early exceeding the established limit of 4 are subject to a failing grade as a result of unsatisfactory attendance and possible dismissal from the program.

All OTA students are expected to remain for the entire duration of each class. Leaving early will be considered an infraction of the attendance policy with the above implications.

In the event of an absence, please note that it is the student's responsibility to obtain class notes and assignments.

## Level I Fieldwork Experiences

During Level I fieldwork a total of 1 absence and/or tardy per semester/fieldwork rotation is acceptable. Please be aware that you may be required to make up absences during clinical experiences.

# Assignment Policy

Assignments are expected to be on time and turned in at the start of class. Any assignment received after the start of class is considered late. Late assignments will lose an initial ten (**10**) points and an additional ten (**10**) point reduction for each calendar day the assignment is late. No e-mailed assignments or virtual copies will be accepted.

Unless otherwise stated all assignments **MUST** be typed.

ALL written assignments are considered formal and **MUST** utilize the APA format of scientific writing. Information regarding the APA format may be found in the SSC reference library and from the reference librarian, your personal computer programs, textbooks or on line at the following website: <https://www.apastyle.org>. You may also find these additional web sites helpful in your research:

Mastering APA Style: Student Workbook and Training Guide: (ISBN#:1-55798-891-9)

[www.easybib.com](http://www.easybib.com)

The American Occupational Therapy Association [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org)

The American Occupational Therapy Foundation [www.aotf.org](http://www.aotf.org)

Assignment points will be taken off for **ALL** spelling and grammatical errors. Please proofread all of your work. If you are aware that this is a difficult area for you, please inform your instructor. Help is available through student services.

In the event that a student is consistently having difficulty in the area of English, grammar and/or spelling, as evidenced by your written assignments, the instructor will refer the OTA student to student services for additional help.

*Proof of attendance is **MANDATORY** as evidence of remediation.*

# ***Classroom & Clinical Dress Code Procedure***

Standards of dress and personal appearance are to be followed by all OTA students while on level I fieldwork and level II internships. These guidelines apply when the student is representing South Suburban College (SSC) and the Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program.

## **Dress Code Classroom**

Long pants, skirts, dresses, shirts or blouses and/or sweaters may be worn. T-shirts and/or hooded sweatshirts with printing/advertisements are prohibited. Any clothing that exposes student's shoulders, midriff, or thighs, (more than 4" above the knee) will be considered unacceptable. No denim clothing, scrubs, or sweatpants/athletic apparel are allowed unless otherwise stated by the instructor.

Shoes should be clean and in good condition. White tennis shoes or comfortable street shoes are acceptable. Sandals may be worn, but sport or beach sandals are not acceptable (no flip flops).

For student presentations or other special occasions, students should dress professionally, including ties, and pressed pants for men and dresses, skirts, or dress pants for women.

## **Classroom Lab**

Student lab attire must be worn as requested by the faculty. Lab attire may consist of:

T-Shirt, stretchable shorts, sweat pants.

In general, clothes worn in labs should be conservative, not exposing midriffs or chest. Clothes should cover all of these areas when the students are involved in any activities in the lab. Keep in mind fashion trends may not be appropriate for lab wear.

## **Dress Code Clinical Site\***

For fieldwork rotations or any scheduled educational experience in a clinical setting student are required to conform to the SSC dress code. In addition, some clinical sites may require a lab coat. This will be required by the site only and the student will be informed prior to the start of the clinical rotation.

- SSC Polo
- Dress Slacks/Khaki style to match polo (no jeans)

## **Footwear**

Footwear must be clean, in good repair and appropriate for the work duties and responsibilities performed, meeting the safety needs of the environment.

Footwear must be one color only; bright/neon/multicolored footwear is not acceptable.

Hose or socks must be worn at all times.

Sandals or flip flops are not acceptable.

## **Name Badges**

Name badges provided by SSC must be worn at all times, above the waist and readily visible. Name badges may not be defaced with stickers, or altered in any way to change the information on the badge. If using a lanyard, the lanyard must have a break away feature. Clinical sites may require a site-specific name badge, if this applies, the procedure of the site should be followed.

\*Clinical sites may have more detailed appearance and dress policies according to their specific needs. If the site conflicts with the SSC, OTA procedures, you must contact the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator to discuss compliance.

# ***Dismissal/ Withdrawal & Readmission Procedure:***

## **Dismissal Procedure**

Students who fail to demonstrate behaviors consistent with the professional practice of occupational therapy as described in the AOTA Code of Ethics, violations of student policies and procedures, and/or maintenance of academic GPA standards as outlined in the SSC Course Catalog- OTA Program- will be dismissed.

## **Withdrawal Procedure**

If a student is unable to complete the OTA program, by choice or circumstances the student must inform the OTA program coordinator and officially withdraw from the OTA courses. Refer to the college catalog for withdrawal process.

Failure to withdraw by the college's assigned date will result in a failing grade.

Per OTA program curriculum design beginning courses serve as the foundation and pre-requisites for succeeding ones as well as fieldwork. Failure to pass OTA coursework with a "C" or better precludes students from enrolling in subsequent coursework and fieldwork.

In the event a student receives a "D" or below in any fall semester OTA coursework, the student cannot continue into the spring semester. The student may be re-admitted the following fall semester by following the readmission procedure (see below). If readmitted, it is strongly recommended that the student enroll in all other coursework, as syllabi and course content changes frequently due to the nature of the healthcare profession and accreditation standards.

In the event a student receives a "D" or below in OTA 204 (Level I Fieldwork) in the spring semester, the student will be unable to begin Level II fieldwork. It is then strongly recommended that the student enroll in the fall coursework as well as the spring coursework. Students must repeat the course(s) in which a grade of "D" or below was achieved.

In all cases the student should meet with the program coordinator for appropriate guidance regarding re-admission.



## Readmission Procedure

Any student who has withdrawn from the OTA program or has not maintained good academic standing, shall be allowed to petition for readmission to the program. Satisfactory re-admission to the OTA program is dependent on the student's ability to first meet admission requirements from the college as well as OTA Program admission standards for the current catalog year that the student is enrolling. (See college catalog).

Students requesting re-admission to the OTA program must submit a type-written letter to the Program Coordinator expressing an interest in re-enrollment for a specific semester. The letter should be typed, dated and signed by the student. Additionally, an OTA program application form must also be submitted by published deadlines. The letter should include the reason for the original withdrawal and a plan to resolve the cause of withdrawal as applicable.

Upon receipt of the student's letter, the Program Coordinator and Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs will review the student's record and make a decision.

A letter from the Program Coordinator of the OTA Program will be sent to the student regarding the decision for readmission.

Readmission is limited to one attempt and career advising and academic counseling is required for students re-applying to the program to ensure academic success.

Readmission to the program must be within 12 months of the withdrawal from the program.

Withdrawals extending beyond 12 months will require the student to apply for admission to the program.

# *Grade Appeal and Grievances*

## **SSC Policy**

[SSC 2024-26 Catalog pages 30-32](#)

## **Student Grievance Procedure (Non-Academic Matters)**

### **Step 1**

Any student who has a complaint (grievance) against an employee of the College regarding a non-academic matter such as sexual harassment, discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, religion or age is encouraged to attempt a resolution by informal means. To do so, the grievant is encouraged to discuss the matter with the person or employee (instructor, if applicable) against whom the complaint is made.

Where the grievant deems the informal process to be impracticable, not in the grievant best interests or where said discussions do no result in a resolution of the matter, the grievant should proceed to Step 2.

### **Step 2**

A complaint shall be made in writing to the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs within ninety (90) days from the date of the occurrence on a form provided by the Dean of Health Professions and Science.

The complaint must be completed in its entirety, must specify the result requested by the grievant and must be signed by the grievant.

In all cases, the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs shall request a written response to the complaint from the person against whom the complaint is made. In no event shall the lack of a written response eliminate or diminish the Dean's right to conduct an investigation into the matter.

The complaint shall be reviewed by the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs and Program Coordinator shall conduct an investigation into the matter. The investigation shall include but not be limited to interviews of persons with knowledge of the incident(s) including the party against whom the complaint is filed, witnesses and others who may have information relevant to the inquiry. Additionally, Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs may review any written documents which may be useful in ascertaining the validity of the complaint.

All parties to a complaint have the-right to have a representative present during the Dean's interview(s).

Within twenty (20) school days from the date of the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs receipt of the complaint or as soon thereafter as is necessary to complete the investigation, the results of the investigation shall be transmitted to the parties by certified mail, along with the Dean's decision. A copy of the results shall also be transmitted to the Program Coordinator.

Any party not satisfied with the decision of the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs, shall proceed to Step 3.

### **Step 3**

Any party not satisfied with the decision of the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs may file a written Appeal with the Program Coordinator when the complaint involves a faculty member within that area within ten (10) school days from the receipt of the decision. Said written appeal shall be submitted on a form provided by the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs.

Upon receipt of a written appeal, the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs or Program Coordinator shall convene at a meeting of the College Appeals Committee to provide a hearing of the appeal.

Said hearing shall be convened within fifteen (15) school days from the date of receipt of the appeal by the applicable Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs.

At the hearing, all parties may have a representative present who may advise the party but not question witnesses.

A decision shall be rendered in writing within ten (10) school days from the conclusion of the hearing and shall be transmitted to the parties by certified mail.

Any party not satisfied with the decision rendered by the College Appeals Committee shall proceed to Step 4.

### **Step 4**

Any party not satisfied with the decision rendered by College Appeals Committee may appeal to the Program Coordinator within seven (7) school days from the receipt of the decision. Said written appeal shall be submitted on a form provided by the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs.

Upon receipt of an appeal, the Program Coordinator shall schedule a hearing with the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs. At the hearing, the parties may present evidence and have counsel present. Thereafter, the Program Coordinator will communicate in writing the decision of the hearing to the parties. The decision of the hearing is final. A decision shall be rendered in writing within thirty (30) school days from the conclusion of the hearing and shall be transmitted to the parties by certified mail.

Complaints against students shall be addressed according to the procedures outlined in the Student Codes of Conduct. The Title IX Coordinator shall assist in the investigation and shall consult with the officer or committee.

Where the complaint also involves a grade complaint, the procedures for academic appeals by students shall control. However, the Dean of Allied Health & Career Programs or Program Coordinator shall participate in the meeting specified at Step 2 and shall assist in the investigation and shall consult with the committee.

At any time before, during or in conjunction with the aforementioned process, the student may elect to utilize additional grievance procedures set forth by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

### *Student Ethics*

Each student is responsible for the academic integrity of all work completed. All reports, papers, projects, and examinations must represent the student's own work. References and other sources of information must be properly cited. Examples of academic misconduct may include: representation of work completed by others as one's own; use of unauthorized assistance in any academic work; failure to cite sources used; obtaining and/or using tests unauthorized by the instructor; copy another student's work during an examination; offering unauthorized assistance to another student; modification, without the instructor's authorization, of any examination, paper, record, report, or project for the purposes of obtaining additional credit or an improved grade; or failure to meet other conditions of academic integrity as required by the instructor.

The penalties for scholastic dishonesty in graded assignments include the possibility of failure in the course. Scholastic dishonesty in examinations will result in a grade of "F" on the examination and an "F" in the course. Students found guilty of scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action including dismissal from the program and possible dismissal from the College. A student dismissed for dishonesty is not eligible for readmission.

Cheating in any form is not compatible with the desired professional behavior and violates the professional Code of Ethics.

Fieldwork students are bound by the ethical standards outlined by the AOTA Principles of Occupational Therapy Ethics, Standards of Practice, the published procedures of the Fieldwork agency related to ethical practice, and by related governmental codes and standard.

# *Appropriate Use of Equipment & Supplies*

The OTA program is responsible for maintaining a safe environment for all educational activities that have implications for the health and safety of clients, students, and faculty in the lab and during completion of other educational activities. All equipment will be inspected at the beginning of a semester where it is used and again prior to use in classroom instruction. Students will receive instruction in proper use of equipment prior to utilizing it in a learning activity with peers. Students are responsible for careful use of all equipment utilized during lab and classroom instruction.

## **General Laboratory & Clinical Safety**

### **Universal Precautions**

Students will receive instruction and assessment in Universal Precautions at least annually. Documentation of acceptable knowledge and skill will be maintained in each student's fieldwork file during classroom lab activities, hands should be washed between sessions of working with different class members or faculty members. Gloves must be worn if a student or instructor has unhealed skin lesions on his or her hands. All used gloves must be disposed of in a container for regulated waste. In the event that any surface in the lab becomes contaminated with body fluids, appropriate cleanup procedures will be implemented, including any needed assistance from maintenance personnel.

### **Infection Control**

The program is responsible for maintaining a safe and healthy environment for students and faculty while in the classroom setting and during any relevant learning activities.

General cleaning and maintenance procedures, performed on a regular basis, include the following:

- The classroom area will be cleaned and maintained in accordance with the policy developed by South Suburban College.
- Program equipment will be cleaned after each use with an antiseptic solution available in the classroom.
- Linens used in class are to be washed after each use.
- Kitchen equipment is to be washed, dried and put away after use.

## **Health & Safety Protocols**

### **Medical & First Aid**

If any injury or illness occurs on campus, immediately call the Campus police at extension 2235. Give your name: describe the nature and severity of the medical problems and the campus location of the incident.

Stay on the phone for instructions.

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are located on every floor of the Main Campus and the Athletic and Physical Fitness Center (Gym). AEDs are for medical emergency use by trained rescuers.

### **Evacuation Procedures**

Evacuation Procedures will be posted in the classroom and laboratory at all times and will be discussed with students at the start of each semester.

## ***Student Support & Program Advising***

Faculty will monitor professional skill development and academic progress of all OTA program students as well as work with the students to foster an understanding of their strengths and areas of growth. The Occupational Therapy Assistant program faculty will be responsible for all program advising related to coursework and fieldwork education. Students will attend Program Orientation at the beginning of the program to review the Student Handbook, familiarize themselves with program policies and procedures as well as discuss program progression, completion guidelines and graduation requirements.

Each student must meet with OTA program faculty prior to registration for the next semester courses, with one mandatory advising session each semester as the student progresses through the program sequence. Students must schedule their initial advisement appointment at the beginning of each semester. In addition to the required session, students are encouraged to initiate additional advising appointments as needed for academic, professional, or career counseling. The course instructor completes program advising related to specific courses. The Program Coordinator is responsible for advising students regarding individualized plans of study and the Fieldwork Coordinator is responsible for advising students regarding matters related to clinical Fieldwork experiences.

# ***Video/Photo Consent Form and Release to Publish***

Both the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program and South Suburban College are frequently involved in professional, research, and community activities that require visual images to effectively communicate with various audiences.

OTA Program and SSC desire your participation in such professional and community activities through the use of your photograph or video image. You are being asked to allow your image to be included in a document that may be published and disseminated to a wide audience for the purposes of research, teaching, or publicity.

You are under no obligation to give consent and permission to use your image. By signing this document at the indicated location below, you are consenting to the use of your image and affirming the way in which your image will be used has been explained and all your questions and concerns to that end have been resolved. Your signature indicates that you are freely giving the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program and South Suburban College the right to include your image. Be assured that no names will be associated with any photographs and/or video images.

I, give permission for photographs and/or video images to be taken and used as described above.

Name (Please Print) :

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (Parent/Guardian if minor)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## ***Handbook Signature Page***

I have received, read and understand all policies as stated in the OTA Student Handbook.

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



# SOUTH SUBURBAN COLLEGE

## **Main Campus**

15800 S. State St.  
South Holland, IL  
60473-1200

## ***Oak Forest Center***

16333 S. Kilbourn Avenue  
Oak Forest, Illinois 60452