LSU Health NEW ORLEANS

School of Allied Health Professions
Department of Occupational Therapy

Technical Standards for Occupational Therapy*

The Department, School and University are committed to assuring all students complete the course of study of the Master of Occupational Therapy program. These technical standards articulate the expectations and requisite abilities considered essential for occupational therapy students to become primary providers of occupational therapy services. All students admitted into this program should be able to provide or direct these abilities at the time of admission and at all times during matriculation.

The major function of an occupational therapist with registered certification (OTR) is to provide occupational therapy services, including evaluation, intervention planning, implementation, and review; discharge planning; outcomes assessment; and related documentation and communication.

The following technical standards describe the essential eligibility requirements for participation and progression in the occupational therapy curriculum. Standards cover observation skills, behavioral and social skills, communication, psychomotor skills, and cognitive skills. It is the expectation of the Department of Occupational Therapy that students engage at all times in client-centered, occupation-based services in a safe, professional, and compassionate manner. These skills are necessary for successful transition into the clinical world of the OTR.

Observation Skills

Overview: The ability to discern, interpret, and act on information from the environment is essential for safe and effective occupational therapy practice. An occupational therapy student must possess the ability to:

- Accurately discern human performance, discriminating between a safe and an unsafe environment and between therapeutic and non-therapeutic behavior and contexts.
- Perceive, assimilate, and integrate information.

Communication Skills

Overview: Effective communication is critical for students to build relationships with faculty, fellow graduate students, coworkers, clients, and their significant others in students' various roles of learner, colleague, consultant, and leader. An occupational therapy student must possess the ability to:

- Gather, comprehend, utilize, and disseminate information effectively, efficiently, and according to professional standards.
- Communicate in a manner comprehensible by patients, professionals, and laypersons.
- Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds; this includes, but is not limited to, the ability to establish rapport and communicate with others.
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize and understand non-verbal behavior.
- Participate in group and face-to-face discussions/presentations in a clear, organized, and professional manner.

Intellectual/Conceptual Skills

Overview: Students must demonstrate critical thinking skills so that they can problem-solve creatively, master abstract ideas, and synthesize information presented in academic, clinical, and fieldwork settings. An occupational therapy student must possess the ability to:

- Measure, calculate, reason, analyze, process, integrate, synthesize, apply and retain facts, concepts, and data.
- Develop and exhibit a sense of professional ethics and also recognize and apply pertinent legal and ethical standards.
- Combine separate pieces of information or specific answers to problems to come up with logical explanations for why seemingly unrelated events occur or are utilized together.
- Use ingenuity and imagination in solving novel, ill-defined problems in complex, real-world settings.

Psychomotor Skills

Overview: Students must provide or direct the motor functions needed to manipulate tools or handle clients in a variety of settings, under a variety of conditions. An occupational therapy student must possess the ability to:

- Provide or direct the safe handling and moving of clients, and completion of medical procedures according to the practice setting.
- Provide or direct accurate utilization of equipment found in the occupational therapy clinical setting.
- Provide or direct the motor skills needed to fabricate splints and other adaptive equipment and to accurately utilize tools.
- Provide or direct the accurate application of a variety of interventions, including preparatory interventions such as modalities and physical manipulation, and occupation-based interventions.

Behavioral and Social Skills

Overview: Students must demonstrate emotional stability, acceptable communication skills, and be capable of developing mature and effective interpersonal relationships with other students, faculty, healthcare workers, clients, and their significant others that inspire trust and respect and exceptional therapeutic use of self. An occupational therapy student must possess the ability to:

- Tolerate the physical, mental, and emotional academic and clinical workloads and to function effectively under stress.
- Adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and function in the face of the uncertainties inherent in the clinical and academic setting.
- Demonstrate the ability to self-reflect and understand why they respond/think/feel in the way that they do, and then self-correct, if necessary. Openness and responsivity to feedback is considered essential for success.
- Safely perceive and navigate varied environments and communities.
- Exhibit the ability and commitment to work collaboratively and professionally with individuals and groups in an intense setting to meet the needs of people of diverse cultures, age groups, socioeconomic groups, and challenges without bias and in a harmonious manner.
- Support and promote the activities of peers and healthcare professionals by sharing knowledge, eleliciting input, and acting with empathy toward others.
- Demonstrate compassion; integrity, concern for others, and interpersonal skills; interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are critical.

Professional Responsibilities

Overview: Students must exhibit the ability to meet the challenges of any academic, medical, or clinical situation that requires a readiness for immediate and appropriate response without interference of personal or medical problems. An occupational therapy student must possess the ability to:

- Attend and arrive to classes on time and possess the organizational skills and stamina for performing required tasks and assignments within allotted time frames.
- Perform problem-solving tasks in a timely manner and prioritize and organize multiple workload needs, completing required work within the specified due dates.
- Take initiative to direct their own learning as evidenced by the ability to prepare in advance, utilize resources before asking for help, and independently explore additional information. Students must be able to take responsibility for their actions and outcomes.
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with other students on assigned projects, and participate willingly in a supervisory process involving evaluation of other students and their own abilities and reasoning skills via giving and receiving feedback, as well as looking for ways to improve.
- Adhere to policies of the university, OT program, and clinical sites. This includes matters ranging from professional dress and behavior, to attending to the program's academic schedule.
- Demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to the code of ethics of their profession and behavior that reflects a sense of right and wrong in the helping environment.

*The Department, School and University are committed to enabling students with disabilities to complete the course of study of the Master of Occupational Therapy program by means of reasonable accommodations consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Applicants with disabilities are encouraged to contact the LSUHSC Office of Disability Services (ODS) during the application process and after being accepted into the program, for confidential and thoughtful conversations about what accommodations may be necessary to meet the technical standards. Contact ODS at: https://www.lsuhsc.edu/administration/academic/ods/

Please sign the attached Acknowledgement of Technical Standards (next page) and return with acceptance form to sahpsa@lsuhsc.edu.

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Acknowledgement of Technical Standards

I understand that as a student in the Master of Occupational Therapy program at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center – New Orleans, I will be expected to participate in activities that will require me to perform all of the technical standards listed in the LSUHSC-NO Technical Standards for Occupational Therapy.

Signature:

Date: