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Welcome to North Shore Community College’s Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program. We are pleased that you have chosen to pursue this most rewarding health and human service profession.

This orientation handbook is intended to provide information about the OTA Program within the context of the College and Division of Health Professions. Information contained within this handbook pertains to your direct participation in any option of study within the OTA Program. In addition to reviewing this important information as part of the application process, we expect you to utilize this program resource, along with the College’s Catalog and Student Handbook, as you engage in the process of your OTA education. Each student is responsible for adhering to the policies and procedures of North Shore Community College and the OTA Program.

We look forward to the mutually rewarding experience of helping you successfully reach your career goal.

Sincerely,

Maureen S. Nardella, M.S., OTR/L, Department Chair
Mary M. Malone, M.S., OTR/L, Full-Time Faculty
Anne Jerome, MS, OTR/L, Full-Time Faculty
Madelyn O’Reilly, M.S., OTR/L, Adjunct Faculty
Melissa Tilton, COTA/L, ROH, Adjunct Faculty
Kim Bushey, OTR/L, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator
TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT

**General Job Description:** Works under the supervision of occupational therapist(s) in the delivery of occupational therapy services within a variety of institutional and community-based settings for persons of all ages whose functional performances (occupational performances) in home, school, workplace or community life are hindered by physical, developmental and/or emotional disability. Assists in the evaluation, planning, and implementation of skilled interventions that are designed to facilitate a client’s meaningful participation in life by restoring, reinforcing and enhancing performance in daily life activities, diminishing or correcting pathology, and promoting and maintaining health. Intervention includes therapeutic use of self; therapeutic use of preparatory methods, purposeful activities, and occupation-based activities; consultation; and education.

**To the Student:** As you reflect upon the general job description of an occupational therapy assistant (OTA) and pursue application to and/or enrollment in the OTA Program, please carefully assess your personal physical, sensory, communication, and cognitive/behavioral and social/behavioral abilities in reference to the technical standards identified for program participation. All OTA students [full-time, part-time, and accelerated options] must meet these defined technical standards. Please contact the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at 978-762-4176 if you require more specific information about the OTA Technical Standards and program requirements related to these standards.

*Performance Level: O = occasionally 50-74%; F = frequently 75-89%; C = constantly 90-100%*
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<thead>
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<th>PHYSICAL STANDARDS</th>
<th>Performance Level*</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIFT: medium work strength to carry/maneuver heavy equipment</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fully/partially support weight of client during transfers to and from various surfaces (bed, chair, wheelchair, mat, toilet, tub, car, etc.) and when engaging client in functional ambulation</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEND/STOOP: to adjust body parts, clothing and/or equipment when engaging clients in functional daily life activities in all areas of occupation (ADL, IADL, Work, Education, Play/Leisure, and Social Participation); for developmental activities</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNEEL: to assist clients who may fall or faint; to perform C.P.R.; to assist clients with mat activities, developmental activities and functional daily life activities in all areas of occupation (ADL, IADL, Work, Education, Play/Leisure, and Social Participation)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROUCH: to manage wheelchair parts and hospital beds, equipment adjustment, storing materials; to assist with lower body ADL training; to assist client in seated activities from bed, chair, wheelchair and/or mat</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRAWL: for developmental interventions; engage in mat activities</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REACH: for retrieval of items in closets, cabinets, etc.; to adjust equipment; to guard clients</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANDLE: sustained grasp and manipulate body parts during intervention; grasp and manipulate tools/equipment and modalities used in OT service delivery, including but not limited to pens/pencils, craft supplies, educational supplies, personal care items; positioning devices, functional mobility equipment, physical agent modalities, PB cuffs, protective gloves, gowns and masks; computers and assistive technology; adaptive equipment; suspension equipment, etc.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEXTERITY: use fine motor skills when performing standardized tests (dynamometer, goniometer, etc.); constructing orthotic devices/splints; writing/documenting; adjusting knobs, dials, and BP cuffs; donning and doffing protective gloves, masks and gowns</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PHYSICAL STANDARDS</strong></td>
<td><strong>Performance Level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STAND:</strong> stand extended periods of time and for majority of working shift</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WALK:</strong> within facility environment (internal) for assigned shift</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within facility environment (external grounds – even and uneven surfaces) for functional mobility training</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PUSH/PULL:</strong> wheelchairs, hospital beds, scooters, hoyer lifts, and other equipment including but not limited to IV poles, oxygen tanks, portable devices</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BALANCE:</strong> to assist clients with functional activities, including mobility (even and uneven surfaces)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENDURANCE:</strong> to manage full-time equivalent Level 2 fieldwork experiences and assigned work shifts</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SENSORY STANDARDS</strong></td>
<td><strong>Performance Level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TACTILE:</strong> <em>Feel</em> to palpate muscle contractions and circulatory pulses; palpate bony landmarks and identify joint articulation; exert the necessary pressure to form splints; to discern skin texture and temperature to discriminate hot and cold modalities</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUDITORY:</strong> <em>Hear</em> verbal directions and requests from health care team and clients/families; hear heart sounds through a stethoscope; hear breath sounds; hear client distress sounds and calls for assistance up to 10 feet away; hear environmental safety alarms; hear for effective communication between clients/families/co-workers</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
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### SENSORY STANDARDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VISUAL:</th>
<th>See in detail to observe and detect client's movements, facial expressions and performance during individual and group intervention; see to observe and attend to the behaviors and needs of up to 10 individuals in a group session; see from a distance to observe client behaviors and performance; see in detail to detect changes in skin integrity, sweating, skin color, swelling, muscle atrophy, and gestures of non-verbal communication; see to detect safety hazards in the environment (water on floor, cords, and other small items) that could pose danger to a client's mobility/functional performance; see in detail to detect/assess BP (manometer dial) and ROM (goniometer)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Read</strong> numbers, letters, printed, typed and cursive writing in fine print; <strong>read</strong> paper and computerized files/records; <strong>read</strong> dials on modality equipment; <strong>read</strong> manuals and forms for administering and scoring standardized tests; <strong>read</strong> client records; <strong>read</strong> to collect information and screening data in English; <strong>read</strong> directions accompanying equipment; <strong>read</strong> to research subject matter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Level</strong></td>
<td>C</td>
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### COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPEAK:</th>
<th>In English language in clear and concise manner; to communicate in person and by phone with clients, families, significant others, the health care team, and community (report factual data orally; interview clients/family; explain role of occupational therapy and purpose of interventions)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Level</strong></td>
<td>C</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPOND:</th>
<th>To clients with communication disorders (aphasia, hearing loss), or those who use ESL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Level</strong></td>
<td>F</td>
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</table>

<p>| COMPREHEND: Oral and written language, including health care terminology in order to communicate with clients, families, significant others, health care providers, and community |
| --- | --- |
| <strong>Performance Level</strong> | C |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNICATION STANDARDS</th>
<th>Performance Level*</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WRITE: In English, clearly and legibly for recording client specific data and general</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>service delivery information in handwritten charts and computerized systems of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>documentation; In proper English using various electronic communication systems (email,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.) to communicate with educational and professional community</td>
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<tr>
<th>COGNITIVE/BEHAVIORAL and SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS</th>
<th>Performance Level*</th>
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<tr>
<td>Think critically for sound clinical judgment in the delivery of occupational therapy</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>services (plan and implement appropriate client-centered interventions; problem solve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to make adjustments in therapeutic interventions based on appropriate and inappropriate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physiological and psychological responses by clients; determine need for consultation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>with occupational therapist and other health care providers/team members)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function safely, effectively, and calmly under demanding and stressful situations</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remain alert to surroundings, potential emergencies; respond to client situations</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>including falls, pain, changes in physical and/or mental status.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Prioritize multiple tasks and maintain composure while managing multiple tasks</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>simultaneously.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustain concentration to attend to demanding and continuous tasks throughout work</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>shift (direct client care and service management tasks)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibit social skills necessary to interact effectively with clients, families,</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervisors, co-workers and community members of the same or different cultures with</td>
<td></td>
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<td>respect, compassion, politeness, tact, collaboration, teamwork, and discretion.</td>
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<td>Maintain personal hygiene consistent with close personal contact associated with client</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>care.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Display attitudes/actions consistent with the core values and ethical standards of the</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>occupational therapy profession.</td>
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<tr>
<td>COGNITIVE/BEHAVIORAL and SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS</td>
<td>Performance Level*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Display attitudes/actions to effectively engage in the supervisory process including acceptance of feedback, modifying behavior in response to feedback, and providing feedback.</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Display attitudes/actions to approach workplace problems in a mature and responsible manner; seek and utilize effective strategies to resolve problems</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abide by established policies and procedures of educational and health care institutions.</td>
<td>C</td>
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*Performance Level: O = occasionally 50-74%; F = frequently 75-89%; C = constantly 90-100%

*Accepted students must document and self-certify their ability to perform all essential tasks with or without reasonable accommodation in order to participate in professional courses throughout the curriculum. A list of those essential tasks is listed in the above technical standards. Students must meet these technical standards throughout the program. If, at any time during a student’s enrollment, his or her ability to perform these tasks is compromised, the student must self-disclose and contact the department chair to determine appropriate action.

You will be asked to self certify by signing the Technical Standards which are included in the Health Forms packet that you will receive upon acceptance into the program.
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COLLEGE MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

College Mission

North Shore Community College is a source of hope and opportunity and a regional leader for social and economic change. Blending tradition and innovation, liberal arts and career preparation, intellectual development and cultural and personal growth, we foster a diverse and caring community of learners where all are welcome and each is challenged. We offer lifelong education responsive to changing community needs, a global economy, evolving technology and the shifting roles faced by individuals and institutions. Our greatest contribution to the Commonwealth is the success and achievement of our students.

The College has established specific goals to fulfill the institution's mission that are stated in the College catalog and posted on the College website at www.northshore.edu.

College Vision

North Shore Community College will be a catalyst for personal, community and regional change through education, training and civic engagement. The College will serve as a beacon of hope and opportunity for an increasingly diverse student body and be a respected, full partner with other public and private organizations seeking better lives for North Shore residents and a vibrant future for the region.
The Division of Health Professions supports the college mission through teaching, learning and community engagement. The Division strives to meet the needs of our students and the health care community that we serve by:

- Promoting a culture of respect
- Providing a learner centered focus
- Enhancing and developing health related degrees and certificates to meet workforce demands
- Incorporating technologies needed to prepare the learner for the ever changing health care environment
- Fostering life long education that cultivates professional growth, competence and scholarship.
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

PROGRAM MISSION

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program provides students with a professional foundation grounded in the concept of occupation as a powerful influence on one’s health and wellbeing. The OTA curriculum integrates technical level occupational therapy theory with the knowledge and skills required for practice in diverse settings within contemporary health and human service delivery systems. The broad based curriculum design is a systematic process of personal and professional development that embraces the individual student’s personal vision, seeks to develop leadership qualities, and instills a commitment of service to the profession and to the community. The program recognizes the dynamic nature of occupational therapy practice and, along with the development of entry-level competence, fosters a commitment to ongoing professional development for continued competency in ever changing roles of the occupational therapy assistant.
North Shore Community College’s (NSCC) Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program is based on the philosophical construct that occupation, or meaningful and purposeful activity, is a central determinant of one’s health and well being (Meyer, 1922; AOTA, 1979, AOTA, 2013; AOTA, 2008b; Trombly, 1995). Meaningfulness pertains to the personal significance of the activity to the individual and provides a source of motivation for performance. Purposefulness pertains to the individual’s personal reason for doing the activity and organizes the individual’s performance towards his or her intended goal (Fisher, 1998; Trombly, 1995). The actual doing of meaningful life role occupations is known as occupational performance. Engagement in occupation allows one to influence the state of his or her health by supporting his or her participation in desired or needed life role activities (AOTA, 2008b). Therefore, occupational therapy’s contextual view of health is centered on occupation and occupational performance for participation in life.

Models of practice that are organized with a person, environment, and occupation focus are intended to promote competence, self-efficacy, and self-satisfaction in one’s occupational performance (Baum & Christiansen, 2005; O’Brien & Hussey, 2012). OTA education is a specialty practice area of occupational therapy. NSCC’s OTA program applies the constructs of occupation in its curriculum to enhance each student’s role performances as an emerging occupational therapy assistant. Engagement in occupation-based learning activities throughout the OTA curriculum affords opportunity for students to achieve competence and satisfaction in their occupational performances. Student self-efficacy is therefore at the core of NSCC’s occupation-based education. Within this philosophical framework, NSCC’s OTA education, with its broad based curriculum offered in three options of study, is a student-centered systematic process of personal and professional development leading to each student’s self-efficacy and self-satisfaction in his or her occupational performances. This level of engagement in occupation is intended to support each student’s participation within and contribution to the constantly evolving occupational therapy profession.
The principles of active learning and student engagement provide the theoretical framework for the teaching-learning process within NSCC’s OTA Program. Brown and Ellison (1995, p. 39) capture the essence of active learning, saying:

“Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just sitting in class listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.”

And, in order for students to engage most fully in learning activities, they must encounter trusting relationships with enthusiastic teachers who also engage - with students, with their subjects and with the teaching process (Bryson & Hand, 2007; AOTA, 2008a).

These principles of active learning and student engagement are embedded in NSCC’s OTA curriculum. Believing in the power of occupation, the faculty of the OTA Program embraces the active nature of the teaching-learning process and their responsibility in facilitating student engagement. Faculty engage with students in a variety of learning activities utilizing diverse teaching methodologies that are responsive to individual differences and needs, that promote student responsibility, that stimulate participation and motivation, that rely on individual and group effort, and that prepare students for professional practice. Such activities include research and evidence-based practice, writing, technology use, discussion, collaboration, peer teaching, group projects, lab practice, simulation, fieldwork, service learning, and reflection. These learning experiences are designed to inspire and challenge the OTA student to engage in role related occupation-based activities that will lead to each student’s ability to promote health and wellbeing, and contribute to meeting society’s occupational needs (AOTA, 2006).

Within these intentional learning activities, occupational therapy theory and OTA technical skills are facilitated along with the cultivation of literacy (including information technology literacy), critical thinking and problem solving, clinical reasoning, professional behaviors, values and ethics, multicultural understanding and respect, intra- and inter-professional collaboration, leadership, advocacy, and personal responsibility for life long learning and civic engagement. All of these skills and values are required of the occupational therapy assistant in practice in order to meet their professional and social responsibilities aimed at improving health outcomes (Gupta & Rice, 2008; AOTA, 2008a; WHO, 2010). In keeping with the philosophy of education as established by the American Occupational Therapy Association, students are involved in a “collaborative process that builds on prior knowledge and experience and integrates professional academic knowledge, experiential learning, clinical reasoning, and self reflection.”
The result of this education is the development of each student’s knowledge, competence and self-efficacy for personal satisfaction and for employability and best practice as an entry-level occupational therapy assistant.

**The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program views all persons as occupational beings in that:**

1. The person is a holistic and occupational being with unique biological, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural and spiritual dimensions.
2. The person engages in occupation within temporal, cultural, social, physical, and virtual environments that are situated within the unique context of one’s personal self and surroundings.
3. The person both influences and is influenced by his or her environment and context.
4. Engagement in occupation fulfills a person’s basic needs while creating meaning and purpose in his or her life.
5. A person’s engagement in occupation influences his or her health and well being.
6. A person’s engagement in occupation supports his or her participation in life.

**The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program views occupational therapy as a facilitator of a client’s health and well being in that:**

1. Occupational therapy serves clients with a humanistic client-centered approach and commitment to caring, engaging persons in their everyday lives.
2. Occupational therapy respects the values, rights and potential of every client.
3. Occupational therapy clients can be individuals, groups, organizations, communities, or populations.
4. Occupational therapy engages in a collaborative process with multiple health and human service workers from different professional backgrounds to promote the best health outcomes for clients.
5. Occupational therapy employs interventions that are based on occupational therapy principles and research evidence drawn from biological, behavioral, and health sciences.
6. Occupational therapy approaches include therapeutic use of self, therapeutic use of occupations and activities, consultation, education, and advocacy.
7. Occupational therapy employs interventions that are enriching, preventive, remedial, compensatory, and supportive in nature to maximize a client’s occupational performances for optimal health and well being.
8. Occupational therapy is a teaching-learning process that employs the use of occupation to assist clients in achieving mastery and competence in life role performances (occupational performances) for participation in life.

9. Occupational therapy engages in a collaborative process with the client so that the client is empowered to identify his or her occupational performance priorities and to solve his or her occupational performance issues.

10. Occupational therapy’s engagement with clients can meet society’s occupational needs.

The **Occupational Therapy Assistant Program views occupational therapy assistant education as an occupation-based teaching-learning process in that:**

1. OTA education views the student as an occupational being seeking achievement of competence and self-efficacy in his or her OTA student and practitioner roles (occupational performance).

2. OTA education is the study of the principles of occupational therapy, biological, behavioral, and health sciences and the application of these principles in the care of clients under the direction of faculty and fieldwork supervisors.

3. OTA education is the systematic development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and professional behaviors that result in desired behavioral changes and progress towards the student’s potential.

4. OTA education recognizes and builds on previous learning while integrating new knowledge, skills and understanding.

**Learning is:**

1. A continuous process during which behavior is changed through experiences.

2. Best facilitated when the learning experiences are selected on the basis of the learner’s needs and abilities, are meaningful and purposeful to the student, and relate to the curriculum requirements, practice expectations and his or her OTA roles.

3. Most effective when the student and teacher are engaged in the teaching-learning process and the environment is democratic.

**The teacher’s role is:**

1. Engaged facilitator of the learning process during which she/he strives to stimulate and guide the student in purposeful and meaningful learning activities. This involves ongoing assessment, self-reflection and modification of learner-centered teaching practices by faculty.
The student’s role is:

1. Engaged participant in the learning process during which he/she assumes shared responsibility with teachers (classroom instructors and fieldwork supervisors) for his/her learning. This involves student self-reflection and openness to feedback for modification of behavior.

References


OTA PROGRAM GOALS AND RELATED OUTCOMES

Goal 1: The OTA Program will provide appropriate learning opportunities for students to acquire the theoretical knowledge and application skills needed for competent entry level practice as an occupational therapy assistant within the roles of direct service provider, advocate, and educator.

1.1 Students will demonstrate a core understanding of and an appreciation for human occupation and the domain of occupational performance, whereby health and participation in life are supported through engagement in occupation.

1.2 Students will demonstrate a knowledge and understanding about the problems that prevent people from engaging adequately in their life role occupations.

1.3 Students will apply their knowledge and understanding of human performance to programs and activities designed to serve persons with occupational dysfunction or at risk for occupational dysfunction.

1.4 Students will analyze, select and utilize various therapeutic occupations and activities appropriate for client-centered OT intervention.

1.5 Students will effectively use occupational therapy terminology, technology, professional literature and scientific research to make informed practice decisions and to communicate in a professional manner.

1.6 Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of various service delivery models and systems in which occupational therapy services can be rendered and assist in the management of these services.

1.7 Students will actively participate in various environments to promote the health and well-being of individuals and populations through preventive and restorative programming focused on occupational performance.

1.8 Students will apply the principles of occupational therapy while integrating the knowledge gained through the study of biological, behavioral, and health sciences in meeting the needs of diverse clients within the unique context and environment [cultural, personal, temporal, virtual, physical and social] of their daily occupations.

1.9 Students will adhere to safety measures when involved in client care.

1.10 Students will demonstrate an effective use of self in the process of therapeutic intervention.

1.11 Students will function effectively as collaborative team members.
1.12 Students will actively advocate for the consumer of occupational therapy services and for the occupational therapy profession.

1.13 Students will demonstrate leadership skills in their practice roles.

**Goal 2:** The OTA Program will endeavor to instill in the student a sense of commitment to the occupational therapy profession’s core values and ethical standards.

2.1 Students will abide by the Ethical Standards of the occupational therapy profession.

2.2 Students will adopt the core values and attitudes of the occupational therapy profession.

2.3 Students will adhere to the Occupational Therapy Standards of Practice.

2.4 Students will demonstrate professional behavior and conduct.

2.5 Students will function appropriately within the guidelines of the OTA role established by the AOTA and state licensure regulations.

**Goal 3:** The OTA Program will endeavor to promote in the student a sense of self-efficacy and self-satisfaction in his or her occupational performance along with a sense of commitment to his or her profession and to continued professional development for best practice in the field of occupational therapy.

3.1 Students will demonstrate the ability to self reflect and self assess their own performance.

3.2 Students will demonstrate competent performance (and a level of self-satisfaction) for entry level practice as an occupational therapy assistant.

3.3 Students will assume responsibility for their own professional development and continued competence.

3.4 Students will be members of the SOTA Club and of MAOT [or home state association] and AOTA

**Goal 4:** The OTA Program will prepare students with the minimum requirements necessary to qualify for the national certification examination and licensure to practice as a certified occupational therapy assistant (COTA).

4.1 Students will successfully complete the competency based OTA Program and earn an Associate in Science Degree in Occupational Therapy in order to be eligible for the process of certification and licensure.
Depiction of the Person-Environment-Occupation Model across NSCC's OTA Curriculum illustrating the expected changes in a student's occupational performance at each stage of the curriculum design. The inner-related circles represent the influences on occupational performance, while the outer area within the cylinder represents the temporal context within which the person-environment-occupation transactions (student learning) takes place. Threaded throughout the curriculum are learning opportunities to promote the development of each student's cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains (educational taxonomies) for maximum occupational performance. The inconsistent dashes in the lines represent the dynamic nature of development. Note: Adapted from Law, et al., 1996, figure 1b.
North Shore Community College
Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
Curriculum Design
(Revised 2014)

Theoretical Constructs and Themes Underlying
Curriculum Planning, Implementation and Evaluation

North Shore Community College’s Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program utilizes an active learning and student engagement pedagogy in response to Yerxa’s (1998) challenge to offer a curriculum that is centered on the idea of occupation and designed to facilitate the development of student autonomy and independence in learning; and in alignment with Gupta and Rice’s (2008) challenge to employ educational pedagogy that is “value-based and fosters self-directed and intentional learning; sound clinical reasoning; critical thinking; cross-disciplinary collaboration and communication; use of technology in the management and processing of data; information and knowledge; and, finally, civic engagement at the professional and societal level” (p. 2). Believing in Yerxa’s recommendation, embracing the model curriculum (AOTA, 2009b), and applying active learning constructs (Griffith & Ursick, 2003; Weimer, 2012), the OTA Program utilizes a practice-oriented rationale for its curriculum design to explicate the idea of occupation, the view of humans as occupational beings, and the thought process of occupational therapy. The Blueprint for Entry-Level Education (AOTA, 2010a) and the accreditation standards for occupational therapy assistant programs (ACOTE, 2011) guide curriculum concepts and content. And, embracing the recommendations of Gupta and Rice, the OTA Program facilitates student engagement (Bryson & Hand, 2007; Gilfoyle, Grady & Nielson, 2011) in classroom and community learning activities in order to meet professional and societal expectations and needs. This approach aligns with and is designed to support the mission of North Shore Community College and the OTA Program.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program’s curriculum design is based on systems theory using the Person-Environment-Occupation Models of Occupational Performance (Christiansen & Baum, 2005, 1997; Baum & Law, 1997; Law, Cooper, Strong, Stewart, Rigby & Letts, 1996). Systems theory recognizes the constant interplay between individuals and their environments. The individual is viewed as an open system that influences and is influenced by the environment. Human performance and participation in life, through engagement in occupation and the process of adaptation, is the resultant behavior of this transaction. Christiansen and Baum (2005, 1997) posit that the individual possesses unique neurobehavioral, physiological, cognitive, psychological and emotional, and spiritual characteristics that serve as his or her intrinsic performance enablers. These scholars also attest to the environment being composed of physical properties (built and natural environments), societal factors, and cultural elements that serve as extrinsic enablers of performance. Because the contexts of society and culture have a profound influence on a person’s engagement in occupation for health-promoting participation in life, the OTA curriculum design supplements the theoretical tenets of the Person-Environment-Occupation Models of Occupational Performance with concepts outlined in Black and Wells’ (2007) Cultural Competency Model to strengthen awareness and develop skills needed for the practical application of cultural sensitivity and social change. In conjunction with these occupational therapy (OT) practice models, the curriculum aligns with Forehand (2005), and Biehler and Snowman’s (1990) descriptions of prevalent taxonomies used in education stemming from Bloom’s taxonomy for development of the cognitive domain, Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia’s taxonomy for the affective domain, and Simpson’s taxonomy for the psychomotor domain.

As taxonomies guide student learning through the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains toward mastery of educational objectives, the Person-Environment-Occupation and Cultural Competency Models facilitate the development of OTA role performance through
meaningful and purposeful activities related to occupational requirements. Together these theoretical constructs provide a framework for understanding the teaching-learning process inherent in education and in occupational therapy practice. And, together these constructs provide a framework for NSCC’s curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation designed with the curricular threads/themes of literacy; critical thinking and problem-solving; clinical reasoning; professional behaviors, values and ethics; multicultural understanding and respect; intra- and interprofessional collaboration; and leadership. These OTA Program curricular threads/themes embed the knowledge and skills described within the general education outcomes expected of all NSCC students (NSCC, 2013) while developing the distinct skill set expected of an occupational therapy assistant in contemporary practice.

Curricular Threads/Themes

**Literacy** encompasses a complex set of skills that enables one’s ability to “access, evaluate and integrate information from a wide range of textual sources” (Reardon, Valentino & Shores, 2012). **Critical thinking** is the ability to analyze and evaluate thinking with a view to improving it. This involves being open-minded, raising vital questions, gathering and assessing relevant information, and offering well-reasoned conclusions and solutions to complex problems (Paul & Elder, 2014). **Clinical reasoning** is the complex process of an OT practitioner’s thinking and acting in the midst of practice, and involves several forms of thinking and perceiving (Mattingly & Fleming, 1994; Schell & Cervero, 1993). **Professional behaviors, values and ethics** involve abidance to the high standards of conduct within the profession as outlined in the Code of Ethics and Ethics Standards, 2010 (AOTA, 2010b). **Multicultural understanding and respect** refers to the ability to acknowledge and interact effectively with people of diverse values, beliefs and behaviors (Black and Wells, 2007). **Intraprofessional collaboration** refers to occupational therapist (students) an occupational therapy assistant (students) working together in a cooperative manner that engenders mutual respect, trust, communication and personal/professional development within the process of meeting learner and/or client-centered outcomes (Dillon, 2001). **Interprofessional collaboration** is the integrative cooperation of different health professionals, blending complimentary competence and skills for the best use of resources to benefit clients [both individuals and communities] in service delivery (Samuelson, Tedeschi, Aarendonk, de la Cuesta, & Groenewegen, 2012; Paul & Peterson, 2001). And, **leadership** refers to the process of engaging with others toward a common purpose in a way that engenders admiration, respect and trust; envisioning the purpose and establishing a direction to meet goal(s); empowering the right people and resources to pursue the goal(s); motivating others in the process of meeting goal(s); encouraging innovation and creativity in approach to achieving goal(s); and achieving results and celebrating collaborative efforts (Dennis & Meola, 2009).

Each NSCC OTA student is considered the primary person in this conceptual design and the OTA Program selectively admits students based on established criteria so that he/she is considered ready to engage in the educational process of the curriculum. This admission process aims to select students who possess intrinsic enablers of performance that best match the extrinsic elements and demands of the educational and practice environments. NSCC facilities, resources, faculty, fieldwork sites, service learning sites, and cultural community comprise the environmental context for student performance and participation. The OTA Program’s curriculum design recognizes the important influence of this environmental context on each student and strives to create an environment that supports student performance while maintaining educational and professional standards.

The OTA curriculum is offered in three options of study (traditional full-time two-year option, part-time three-year option, and accelerated 14 month option) to meet the scheduling desires and performance needs of students. Selected learning activities throughout the curriculum are the occupations woven into the curriculum design. Careful attention is applied to planning and
implementing a curriculum that maximizes student performance in tasks and activities related to his or her future occupational role as an entry-level occupational therapy assistant. Within the curriculum the student is transitioned into this terminal role through the stages of Entry Level OTA Student, Intermediate OTA Student, and Advanced OTA Student. These stages mirror the levels of role performance previously described by the American Occupational Therapy Association for OTA practitioners (AOTA, 2002) and more recent guidelines for roles and supervision levels of OTA practitioners (AOTA, 2009a; Ryan & Sladyk, 2005). Maximizing the fit among the person, environment, and occupations is the ultimate challenge of the curriculum throughout each stage, one that is constantly dynamic by the nature of all elements involved. It is believed that maximizing the fit maximizes performance (Law, et.al, 1996).

Maximizing student performance in OTA role tasks and activities is the program’s focus as this is their occupational performance. To achieve this goal, the OTA Program attempts to promote the student’s sense of efficacy and self-esteem by developing competency. Competency develops by enabling the student to engage in goal directed activities that are accomplished by that student, that produce a feeling of satisfaction, and that lead to the ability to control one’s behavior to function both independently and interdependently. The OTA curriculum, comprised of its academic, fieldwork and service-learning components, is therefore competency-based. These competencies are inclusive of the cognitive domain that stresses knowledge and intellectual skills, affective domain that emphasizes attitudes and values, and psychomotor domain that focuses on physical abilities and skills (Biehler & Snowman, 1990). Achievement of these competencies throughout the curriculum culminates in the mastery and performance of skills and behavior patterns expected of the entry-level OTA practitioner.

The prescribed program of study affords opportunity to develop sound knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors expected of an entry-level OTA practitioner. Courses are strategically developed and sequenced within a developmental learning format in that content, competencies and related learning objectives flow from foundations to applications with levels of understanding moving from basic to complex. Despite a developmental strategy in course structuring and sequencing, the teaching-learning process of the curriculum is not considered linear. Rather, the educational process remains fluid and dynamic to embrace the transactional approach of systems theory inherent in Bloom’s taxonomy and the Person-Environment-Occupation models of occupational performance. Active learning is utilized increasingly throughout the curriculum via individual and group classroom assignments, simulations, level 1 and level 2 fieldwork, service learning projects; and various modes of feedback via formative and summative assessment are integrated to promote the development of each student’s performance skills and performance patterns. Performance skills and performance patterns are observed performances one carries out when engaging in occupations (AOTA, 2008). Development of performance skills and performance patterns expected of the entry level occupational therapy assistant is critical to each student’s successful participation in the curriculum and in his or her role competence as an OTA.

Believing in the transactive approach to occupational performance, the OTA curriculum takes special consideration to the materials and learning activities (occupations) offered to the students as well as to the learning environment in which the students are expected to perform and participate. Diverse lab supplies are intended to enable practice with occupation-based activities, purposeful activities and preparatory methods (AOTA, 2008) used in OT intervention. Emphasis is placed on engaging students with the occupation-based materials in the lab so that focus can be directed to use of occupations in OT intervention. Diversity of settings for fieldwork and service learning engagement afford student exposure to a variety of practice contexts and afford opportunity for students to exercise all behaviors associated with the program’s curricular themes. The curricular themes are embedded within OTA courses that infuse web support, writing support, research, laboratory skills practice, and field/service learning throughout the curriculum and strategic initiatives are currently driving efforts to
Further enhance educational technology and simulation experiences, leadership development, cultural competency, intraprofessional collaborative learning experiences with local occupational therapy programs, interprofessional collaborative learning experiences with other health and human service programs, research and evidence-based practice skills, while enhancing the program’s teaching, learning and assessment practices.

Course syllabi are important tools in the teaching-learning process as they identify the expected competencies and related learning objectives for the students and the faculty. In addition, each OTA course syllabus outlines the specific content to be addressed, the assigned reading and additional references for preparation, the methodology of instruction, and the assessment and evaluation methods employed. Providing this information affords students the opportunity to best prepare themselves for course work and employ relevant strategies for maximum performance in each course. OTA course syllabi are also designed with a rationale for each competency in an effort to help the student appreciate the purpose of the competence by connecting it to the role of the occupational therapy assistant. The intent is for the student to see each competency’s direct relevance to their self-chosen future role. In this way the student is more likely to consider the selected learning activities as meaningful and purposeful (occupation) and therefore ignite their own motivation to engage and perform. Motivation has a critical underpinning in the occupational performance model as comprising the innate drive to explore the environment and demonstrate mastery within it (Christiansen & Baum, 2005; 1997). Motivation as a key factor in the development of student exploration and mastery therefore underlies our curriculum planning and implementation.

Curriculum planning and implementation is considered the program’s occupational performance. The program’s performance must be afforded feedback in order to optimize its effectiveness. Utilizing a systematic process of assessment and evaluation, the OTA Program monitors and determines the performance effectiveness of its curriculum in meeting program outcomes and strategic goals. Major indicators of program effectiveness related to curriculum design, planning and implementation include OTA course-specific assessments and evaluations, student monitoring form, AOTA’s student evaluation of fieldwork experience, Level 2 fieldwork evaluation, Level 1 fieldwork evaluation, student exit survey, NBCOT results, graduate survey, and employer survey. In addition, faculty evaluations completed by students and supervisors are reviewed and discussed with appropriate persons. Annual advisory board meetings afford opportunity for external review of program with feedback and recommendations. The structural framework of the evaluation plan is designed to allow for ongoing curriculum review, assessment and strategic planning. In turn, this system enables timely and efficient response to assessment findings so that effectiveness of the program’s occupational performance is maximized.

Content, Scope and Sequence

General education courses are offered concurrently with OTA technical courses (traditional 2-year option and part-time 3-year option) or prior to OTA technical courses (accelerated option). These courses focus on knowledge and skill acquisition embedded in the liberal arts and sciences including communication, critical thinking and problem solving, human growth and development, human behavior, and structure and function of the human body. Computer and information technology literacy is demanded of students in web supported and hybrid designed OTA technical courses throughout the curriculum as well as in specific course assignments.

OTA technical courses are structured in a way to acquire knowledge, promote understanding, and develop attitude and skill for professional formation. The newly enrolled student begins in the role of Entry Level OTA Student where he or she is expected to develop basic knowledge and skills, socialize into academic and professional climates, and accept responsibility and accountability for his or her own behaviors in role-related learning activities. In this entry-level stage of development, students begin to engage in the curricular themes/threads of literacy;
critical thinking, problem-solving and clinical reasoning; professional behaviors, values and ethics; multicultural understanding and respect; intra- and interprofessional collaboration; and leadership. The first technical courses offered in the curriculum focus on foundational OT concepts and basic practice skills of the occupational therapy assistant. Occupation as the core concept of occupational therapy is introduced and emphasized in OTA 101, Orientation to Occupational Therapy, through historical perspectives, theoretical and practice models, contemporary professional practice initiatives, research article reviews, and the process of activity analysis. Level 1 fieldwork affords opportunity to integrate learning via observation, selective/directive participation, reflection, and discussion of experiences. Occupational performance is grounded as the focus of the OT process and students begin to recognize personal, contextual and environmental factors that support or hinder a person’s performance in life role activities. Further socialization into the profession is facilitated through review of and discussion regarding culture, ethical principles, core values, attitudes, and behaviors.

Introductory lab courses [OTA 103, Therapeutic Application of Modalities 1 and OTA 105, Therapeutic Group Process] provide opportunity to develop awareness and beginning skill in therapeutic assessments, interactions and interventions linked to occupational performance. OTA103 employs laboratory practice in standard (universal) precautions, biomechanical principles of movement and function, activity analysis, assistive devices and engages students in a community mobility experience with reflection pertaining to physical as well as psychosocial impact of living life with mobility impairment. OTA 105 engages students in the planning and leading of activity-based groups emphasizing cultural awareness and respect, therapeutic use of self, and group dynamics.

The general education courses offered concurrent in this stage of the curriculum within the traditional option of study [Composition 1 – CMP101, General Psychology – PSY102, and Anatomy & Physiology 1 – BIO103] provide foundational knowledge and skills to think critically, write effectively, and develop an understanding of human behavior and body functions (neuromusculoskeletal and sensory) in order to enhance the student’s performance and participation in OTA courses. These general education courses are pre-admission requirements for the accelerated option of study and therefore students enrolled in the accelerated option possess this foundational knowledge and skills to support their performance and participation in Entry Level OTA courses.

As students gain foundational knowledge and an appreciation for fundamental OT concepts, process, and interventions, they engage in OTA courses that integrate more contextual information for consideration. Here the student begins the transition into the Intermediate OTA Student role where he or she is expected to demonstrate increased level of literacy; problem solving and critical thinking; clinical reasoning; independence and interdependence; professional behaviors, values and ethics; multicultural understanding and respect; collaboration; and leadership. OTA 108, Medical Specialties, focuses on common neurological, medical, and orthopedic conditions that lead to dysfunction in occupational performance. Researching diagnoses and thinking about these conditional factors when planning evidence-based OT interventions is facilitated.

Activity programming is incorporated into OTA 110, Planning and Implementation of Programs for Health and Wellbeing, where students consider the impact of normal aging, developmental disabilities, and chronic conditions associated with the adult/older adult population. Level 1 fieldwork in various institutions of health care and community settings affords opportunity to collaborate with other professionals and support staff, plan and implement therapeutic programs for specific groups of older adults and/or adults with developmental disabilities, develop group leadership skills, develop professional roles and behaviors, and reflect on the influence of activity on an adult’s/elder’s health and wellbeing. Service learning projects expand the student’s knowledge and skills as health educator and program developer within the community.
OTA112, Leadership and Management in Occupational Therapy emphasizes the importance of leadership qualities in all occupational therapy practitioners with efforts to develop each student’s leadership skills within this course and expand throughout all stages of the curriculum. Review of research principles and evidence-based practice expands the student’s knowledge and understanding for application within the curriculum and in practice. The inclusion of public policy, ethics, credentialing, and service management responsibilities pertinent to various practice environments and consideration to the nature of various health care delivery systems and practice settings contribute to the student’s awareness of some of the internal and external factors influencing service delivery and practice roles of an occupational therapy assistant.

OTA 104, Therapeutic Applications of Modalities 2, expands the student’s understanding and appreciation of traditional OT assessment and intervention skills with greater consideration to client factors, performance skills, performance patterns, context and environment, and activity demands (AOTA, 2008) that influence occupational performance and participation. Laboratory practice and simulation promotes technical skill development and procedural reasoning along with some conditional reasoning. Remedial, adaptive and preventive approaches in OT intervention are emphasized.

The general education courses offered concurrent in this stage of the curriculum within the traditional option of study [Composition 2 elective – CMP104-150, Human Growth and Development – PSY118, and Anatomy & Physiology 2 – BIO104] provide expanded foundational knowledge and skills to think more critically, write more effectively, better understand human development across the lifespan, and understand the functions of additional body systems (digestive, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, urogenital) in order to enhance the student’s performance and participation in OTA courses. These general education courses are pre-admission requirements for the accelerated option of study and therefore students enrolled in the accelerated option possess this expanded foundational knowledge and skills to support their performance and participation in Intermediate Level OTA courses.

As the student moves through the Intermediate OTA Student role stage, he or she is expected to increase responsibility in the learning process to further develop and refine his or her skill set relative to all curricular themes/threads. Appreciation for mental health concepts and programming is developed through OTA 203, Mental Health Concepts in Occupational Therapy Practice. Knowledge of mental illness, psychiatric disorders, addictions, and psychological and social factors that place persons at-risk for occupational dysfunction is reinforced and professional skills are developed through level 1 fieldwork experiences within various community programs and hospital-based facilities. Awareness of mental health issues and occupational therapy programming within the contexts of medical, community, and social systems is promoted through class and field learning activities.

OTA 207, Occupational Therapy for Pediatric Populations, also combines classroom, level 1 fieldwork, and service learning experiences to promote knowledge, understanding, and practice skills related to OT intervention with children (birth to young adulthood) in early intervention, school and community-based practice settings. Common diagnoses and conditions, laws and regulations, and service delivery models pertaining to practice are discussed.

OTA 201, Therapeutic Application of Modalities 3, is the final laboratory course in the academic component of the curriculum and is offered (along with OTA 203 and OTA 207) just before students enter level 2 fieldwork. This course utilizes a modified problem-based learning approach to assimilate knowledge and skill for clinical practice and professional development. Students are facilitated in the development of their clinical reasoning skills, employing greater
situational consideration (conditional and pragmatic reasoning) along with procedural thinking. Skill and confidence for clinical practice are enhanced through a variety of experiential lab activities, case studies, simulations, and case-based performance evaluations to promote readiness for level 2 fieldwork. Focus is on client-centered intervention planning, implementation and documentation, along with student-centered professional development that enhances performance relative to all curricular themes.

OTA 220, Current Topics in Occupational Therapy, extends the students' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation for specialty practices and entrepreneurship in the field of occupational therapy. This course provides a closer study of topics of special interest in contemporary OT practice including but not limited to evidence-based practice, interprofessional collaboration, medical ethics, assistive technology, orthotics and prosthetics, ergonomics and universal design, low vision, driver rehabilitation, pharmacology, pain management, case management, entrepreneurship, alternative therapies and topics related to emerging areas of practice. Clinical reasoning is emphasized in the process of studying these topics with diverse specialists in the field.

As the student transitions into the Advanced OTA Student Role, he/she begins level 2 fieldwork (OTA 204 and OTA 208) where students are immersed in the integration and application of all curricular themes within the field practice of occupational therapy. Students are afforded the opportunity to identify their professional interests for consideration in placement and faculty provides input into the placement process, which is led by the academic fieldwork coordinator. The intent is to “maximize the fit” between student and available field site for maximizing student performance and satisfaction. In conjunction with level 2 fieldwork, the curriculum enables students to stay connected with each other and with the academic institution through hybrid designed OTA 206, Seminar in Occupational Therapy. In addition to being a support system, this course contributes to mastery of learning and assists in the student’s transition to entry-level practice. Professional behaviors, professional relationships, supervision, ethics, standards of practice, application of theory and evidence-based practice, ongoing leadership development and contemporary issues related to the real practice world are primary topics of discussion (online and in classroom). In addition, resume writing and job search, and licensure and certification processes are discussed. The culmination of work leads to the creation of student portfolios. Each student graduating from the OTA program is able to display pieces of his or her professional self through an individualized portfolio that reflects the program’s curricular themes. Development of this portfolio not only equips the student with an effective tool to support qualifications for an entry-level OTA job, it serves to pave the way for ongoing professional development and competency tracking recommended for best practice in the field of occupational therapy.

References


## North Shore Community College
### Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
#### Table Presentation of Curriculum Design
(Revised 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Performance (OTA Student Role Stages)</th>
<th>Sequence</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Teaching-Learning Process (Person-Environment-Occupation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entry Level OTA Student</strong></td>
<td>Semester 1 Fall (Traditional and Accelerated OTA)</td>
<td>OTA 101 OTA 103 OTA 105 General Ed (OTA) CMP 101 PSY 102 BIO 103</td>
<td>• ACOTE Standards (Introduction of foundational content; OT tenets; theoretical perspectives; screening, evaluation and referral; intervention planning and implementation; context of service delivery; leadership and management; scholarship; professional values, ethics and responsibilities; level 1 fieldwork) • NSCC Degree Requirements</td>
<td><strong>Person (student):</strong> readiness skill set with emerging OTA skill set <strong>Environment (faculty, level 1 fieldwork supervisors, course materials and resources):</strong> impart knowledge, model professional attitudes and behaviors, introduce core concepts, multicultural understanding and practice skills, support learning and collaboration, foster literacy, stimulate critical thinking and problem solving, facilitate self reflection <strong>Occupations:</strong> classroom learning activities, laboratory practice, level 1 fieldwork, individual and group assignments</td>
</tr>
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**OTA Program Curriculum Design (2014) 29**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Performance (OTA Student Role Stages)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intermediate OTA Student</strong></td>
<td>Semesters 1 &amp; 2 Fall (Accelerated OTA)</td>
<td>OTA 108 OTA 110 OTA112 OTA 104 OTA 201 OTA 203 OTA 207 OTA 220</td>
<td>- ACOTE Standards (Expansion of foundational content; OT tenets; theoretical perspectives; screening, evaluation and referral; intervention planning and implementation; context of service delivery; leadership and management; scholarship; professional values, ethics and responsibilities; level 1 fieldwork)</td>
<td>Person (Student): developing and refining OTA skills</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semesters 2 &amp; 3 Spring – Fall (Traditional OTA)</td>
<td>General Ed (OTA) CMP 104-148 BIO 104 PSY 118</td>
<td>- NSCC Degree Requirements</td>
<td>Environment (faculty, level 1 fieldwork supervisors, service-learning affiliates, course materials, and resources): impart knowledge, model professional attitudes and values, expand upon core concepts, multicultural understanding and practice skills, facilitate independence and interdependence, support learning, promote problem solving and critical thinking, cultivate collaboration and leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semesters 2, 3, 4, 5 Spr- Fall – Spr – Fall (Part-time OTA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occupations: classroom activities, case-based learning activities, lab practice, simulations, intra- and interprofessional collaborations, individual and group assignments, level 1 fieldwork, service learning projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Performance (OTA Student Role Stages)</td>
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<td>Scope</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced OTA Student</strong></td>
<td><strong>Semester 3</strong> Summer (Accelerated OTA)</td>
<td>OTA 204 OTA 206</td>
<td>• ACOTE Standards (Completion of/Applied foundational content; OT tenets; theoretical perspectives; screening, evaluation and referral; intervention planning and implementation; context of service delivery; leadership and management; scholarship; professional values, ethics and responsibilities; level 2 fieldwork) • NSCC Degree Requirements</td>
<td>Person (student): refining and mastering skill set Environment (faculty, level 2 fieldwork supervisors, course materials, and resources): impart knowledge, model professional attitudes and behaviors, mentor, support learning, promote clinical reasoning and professional development, cultivate collaboration and leadership Occupations: immersion in situational learning activities within level 2 fieldwork, EBP, intra- and interprofessional collaboration, reflection and discussion related to professional practice and professional self, development of student portfolio, exploration/initiation of certification and licensure process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entry Level OTA Practitioner</strong></td>
<td><strong>Semester 4</strong> Spring (Traditional OTA)</td>
<td><strong>Semester 5</strong> Spring (Part-time OTA)</td>
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</table>

OTA Program Curriculum Design (2014)
OTA PROGRAM OPTIONS OF STUDY

The OTA Program is offered in three options of study (variations in curriculum sequence) to meet the needs of students. These variations include:

1) Traditional full-time (two year) option,
2) Part-time (three year) curriculum sequence, and
3) Accelerated (13-14 month) option.

Program requirements are the same for each option and all options of study lead to an Associate in Science (A. S.) degree, with a major in Occupational Therapy.

Students are encouraged to follow the sequence of courses as presented in the designed curriculum advising sheets located on the following pages and to complete the course of study within the time frames identified (3 semesters – accelerated OTA; 4 semesters - traditional OTA; and 6 semesters - part-time OTA). Students are expected to complete all program requirements, including Level 2 Fieldwork, within 4 years of entering the program.

All options of study within the OTA Program require a total of seventy credits (50 OTA credits and 20 general education credits).
**Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA)**

**Traditional Option**

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program’s Traditional Option is the two-year curriculum presented on the official program of study sheet (linked to the OTA web page). Although packaged in four semesters to align with the traditional design of associate degree programs, students are advised to take as many of the general education courses as possible in advance and/or during summer sessions to reduce the heavy credit load in the first year.

### First Year

**Fall:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OTA 101*</td>
<td>Orientation to Occupational Therapy</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTA103</td>
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**Spring:**

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<tr>
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<tr>
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### Second Year

**Fall:**

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<td>Mental Health Concepts in Occupational Therapy Practice</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTA207*</td>
<td>OT for Pediatric Populations</td>
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<tr>
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<td>OTA206</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTA208</td>
<td>Level 2 Fieldwork Practice 2</td>
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</table>

**Total Program Credits** => 70

*Note: * indicates course with a Level 1 Fieldwork component (each Level 1 Fieldwork experience requires a total of 30 hours over the semester).
**Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA)**

**Part-time Option**

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program’s Part-time Option enables student participation in the Occupational Therapy Assistant program on reduced semester course load (with the exception of the final semester in which Level 2 fieldwork must be completed in full-time equivalent hours), a desirable option for students who are unable to meet the demands of the traditional option. This option of study is designed to be completed in 3 years as outlined in the following sequence of course work.

### First Year

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Fall:</th>
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<tbody>
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### Second Year

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### Third Year

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<td>OTA206</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTA208</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Program Credits => 70**

Note: * indicates course with a Level 1 Fieldwork component (each Level 1 Fieldwork experience requires a total of 30 hours over the semester).
Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA)

Accelerated Option

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program’s Accelerated Option is designed to enable completion within an extended 3-semester time frame, typically 13-14 months pending fulfillment of Level 2 fieldwork requirements. Admission requirements into the accelerated option of study include successful completion of all General Education courses required in the traditional Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program. OTA courses constitute all of the credit hours within the extended 3 semesters as outlined in the following sequence of course work.

### Pre-Admission Credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMP101</td>
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<td>CMP104-150</td>
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<td>BIO103</td>
<td>Anatomy and Physiology 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY118</td>
<td>Human Growth and Development</td>
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</table>

**Total Pre-Admission Credits == 20**

### Fall Semester

- **OTA101***: Orientation to Occupational Therapy 4
- **OTA103**: Therapeutic Application of Modalities 1 4
- **OTA105**: Therapeutic Group Process 1
- **OTA108**: Medical Specialties 4
- **OTA110***: Planning & Implementation of Programs for Health & Well-being 4
- **OTA112**: Leadership and Management in OT 2

### Spring Semester

- **OTA104**: Therapeutic Application of Modalities 2 4
- **OTA201**: Therapeutic Application of Modalities 3 3
- **OTA203***: Mental Health Concepts in Occupational Therapy Practice 4
- **OTA207***: OT for Pediatric Populations 4
- **OTA220**: Current Topics in Occupational Therapy 2

### Summer Semester [extended into fall semester]

- **OTA204**: Level 2 Fieldwork Practice 1 6
- **OTA206**: Seminar in Occupational Therapy 2
- **OTA208**: Level 2 Fieldwork Practice 2 6

**Total Program Credits == 70**

Note: * indicates course with a Level 1 Fieldwork component (each Level 1 Fieldwork experience requires a total of 30 hours over the semester).
COURSE MATERIALS

It is the policy of the OTA Program to provide each student with a course syllabus on the first meeting of every course either in hard copy or posted within ANGEL. Each OTA course syllabus includes specific competencies that align with ACOTE standards along with OTA role-related rationales, content, related learning objectives, teaching-learning methodologies, and assessment and evaluation methods. In addition, course-specific policies and procedures are included in the syllabus and professional behavior expectations are highlighted. Course assignments, quizzes, and tests are also included with course materials and the weighting of all components factored into the final grade is indicated. Each student is responsible for accessing course materials in ANGEL and maintaining his or her copy of course materials distributed by faculty, along with abiding by the policies, procedures, and schedule identified within them.

The course syllabus is intended to be a tool for student learning. Students should constantly reference the syllabus when preparing for class as well as when preparing for tests.

The OTA Program infuses web supported materials into each course. Each student is responsible for accessing and utilizing relevant course materials through his/her Pipeline account into “Angel.” An orientation to “Angel” will be provided to all students.
LEVEL I FIELDWORK

LEVEL 1 FIELDWORK is coordinated with 4 specific OTA courses and is an integral part of the Occupational Therapy Assistant curriculum. The goal of level 1 field experience is to augment the academic components of knowledge, skill, attitude, and behavior. The emphasis is on providing students with introductory field experience within a variety of service delivery models.

The general outcomes of LEVEL I FIELD EXPERIENCE will:

- Offer the student the opportunity to experience supervised service delivery in concert with the theoretical concepts learned in the classroom.
- Provide students appropriate opportunities to evaluate their interest in and potential for practice in the field of Occupational Therapy.
- Provide the opportunity for students to observe and participate in various health care settings and service delivery models.
- Provide students with the opportunity to develop awareness of and appreciation for the interpersonal skills and attitudes necessary for working with persons having physical, cognitive, psychosocial, and/or developmental needs.
- Provide opportunity for supervised observation, practice of selective skills, and the application of knowledge learned in the classroom with actual clients in need of services.
- Provide students with the opportunity to develop awareness, appreciation and demonstration of professional behaviors.
- Provide students with the opportunity to develop awareness, appreciation and demonstration of professional communication skills, including collaborative interaction within supervisory, departmental, and interdisciplinary relationships.
- Arrive at a realistic assessment of one's own strengths and weaknesses in the process of becoming a professional occupational therapy assistant.
- Demonstrate the assumption of personal responsibility for continued learning by seeking out appropriate resource persons and initiating independent study.

Each course syllabus with a Level 1 FW component includes specific competencies and FW objectives. Assessment of student performance relative to competencies and objectives are conducted through various course assignments and fieldwork performance evaluation. All Level I field experience courses require a minimum of 30 hours, except OTA110, which requires 24 hours of fieldwork and includes an additional service learning project. Level 1 fieldwork is affiliated with each of the following courses:

OTA 101: ORIENTATION TO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
OTA 110: PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING
OTA 203: MENTAL HEALTH CONCEPTS IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE
OTA 207: OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FOR PEDIATRIC POPULATIONS

A student involved in Level I Field Experience in ORIENTATION TO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY may be assigned in acute care hospitals, outpatient settings, rehabilitation facilities, skilled nursing facilities (short and long term care) and community agencies (e.g., Home Health Agencies, Day Care Centers, etc.).

The placement of fieldwork in PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING will be in settings that service adults with developmental disabilities as well as other adult and older adult populations. These sites include day habilitation centers, skilled nursing, short term and long term care facilities, adult day centers, and assisted living facilities under the direction of an Activity Director or rehabilitation staff. The corresponding service-learning experience (health education program development and implementation) will be in various community settings for higher functioning older adults including senior centers and housing complexes.
The placement for fieldwork in MENTAL HEALTH CONCEPTS IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE will be in various hospital and community settings, whose programs are designed for persons with various psychological and social issues hindering their occupational performance.

The placement for fieldwork in OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FOR PEDIATRIC POPULATIONS may be in school systems, early intervention programs and private therapy clinics.

As the student progresses through these Level 1 Fieldwork experiences, he/she develops increased comfort with various client groups and becomes more aware of the different needs of clients. These field experiences contribute to the development of the student’s professional self.

Upon completion of each Level 1 Fieldwork experience, the fieldwork supervisor/fieldwork educator will evaluate the student on forms provided by the College’s OTA Program. A copy of this evaluation form will be provided to the student as part of course materials. In addition, the student will be expected to complete a student evaluation of fieldwork experience for the OTA Program.

For all fieldwork, students must accept and be prepared to travel to the site assigned by the academic fieldwork coordinator (within 60 miles). In addition, students must comply with the responsibilities outlined on the “Student Responsibilities and Agreement for Participation in Level 1 and Level 2 Fieldwork.”

Students must pass each Level 1 Fieldwork experience with an overall satisfactory performance as evaluated by the field site supervisor(s). Scores on the Level 1 Fieldwork Performance Evaluation are factored into the student’s final course grade.
LEVEL 2 FIELDWORK PRACTICES 1 AND 2 (OTA204 and OTA208) are the final component of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program. Level 2 Fieldwork is the culmination of academic and Level I field learning in a supervised, service delivery experience within the health field. This in-depth field experience provides the final opportunity to integrate theoretical knowledge with clinical practice as an OTA student. The goal of Level 2 Fieldwork is to develop competent, entry-level skills as a generalist occupational therapy assistant. The emphasis, therefore, is on application of knowledge, skills attitudes and behaviors expected of an entry-level occupational therapy assistant in the delivery of occupational therapy services.

Students engage in Level 2 Fieldwork during the final semester of their chosen curriculum sequence [Fourth semester (Spring) for traditional OTA students, sixth semester (Spring) for part-time OTA students, and the third (Summer/Fall) semester for accelerated OTA students]. Only under extenuating circumstances can Level 2 Fieldwork be delayed and the delay can be no longer than one semester. All Level 2 Fieldwork must be completed within 12 months following completion of the didactic portion of the program. Regardless of the option of study, Level 2 Fieldwork is comprised of two, eight-week full-time experiences in settings that afford student exposure to different populations and/or service delivery models. The student must follow his or her fieldwork supervisor’s schedule and meet full-time equivalency requirements. The student must accept and be prepared to travel to his/her assigned fieldwork site (within 60 miles).

Students are interviewed by the academic fieldwork coordinator prior to engaging in this fieldwork experience. This affords the student opportunity to self-assess strengths and weaknesses as well as discuss areas of interest in order to prepare self for placement and assist in the placement assignment. Along with student interest, faculty input and availability of field placements are major determinants in placement assignment. Facility reference files are available for student review and can be accessed upon request to the academic fieldwork coordinator.
Fieldwork sites utilized for placement are managed by the academic fieldwork coordinator who reports to the department chair of the OTA Program. If a student has a personal contact or information regarding a potential fieldwork site, he/she is to convey this information to the academic fieldwork coordinator. The student should never contact a fieldwork site on his or her own initiative. All communications regarding potential placement are to be generated and confirmed by the academic fieldwork coordinator.

The OTA Program will distribute a Level 2 Fieldwork Manual to each student prior to the start of Level 2 Fieldwork Practices 1 and 2. This Manual outlines the specific expectations, competencies, policies and procedures relative to Level 2 Fieldwork. Student performance will be evaluated by the fieldwork supervisor/educator midway through and at the end of each placement. In addition, students are expected to complete a formal evaluation of their field experience to share with their fieldwork supervisor/educator and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.

To meet the primary goal of developing a competent, entry level, generalist occupational therapy assistant, Level 2 Fieldwork is designed to:

1. Provide a concentrated experience in Occupational Therapy intervention planning and implementation, utilizing skills gained through academic and Level 1 fieldwork experiences.
2. Provide professional role models for the student in direct and indirect service roles.
3. Provide opportunity for the student to assist in the evaluation of clients within the OTA role.
4. Provide opportunity for the student to plan and implement occupational therapy services designed to enhance a client's occupational performance.
5. Provide opportunity for the student to promote his/her technical skills, clinical reasoning, ethical practice and professional development.
6. Provide opportunity for the student to develop his/her interpersonal skills, communication skills, attitudes and values necessary for working effectively with clients, families, and professional colleagues.
7. Provide the student with feedback that contributes to the development of his/her professional self in preparation for entry level practice.
1. The student shall be responsible for the completion of all health forms, CPR certification, and for maintaining professional malpractice liability insurance and personal health insurance as required prior to fieldwork rotations, consenting to the release of this information to field sites as requested. In addition to submitting documentation, the student is responsible for maintaining a copy of his/her health forms, CPR and liability insurance.

2. The student shall accept a fieldwork placement within 60 miles and be prepared to assume all costs associated with travel.

3. The student shall accept each fieldwork assignment in a professional manner by displaying a positive attitude, openness to learning and effective interactions with other students, AFWC, faculty, fieldwork supervisors, clients and all other personnel within the college and field site facility.

4. The student shall follow his or her fieldwork supervisor/educator's schedule. Level 2 Fieldwork schedules may include early morning, evening, weekend and holiday hours.

5. The student shall comply with all site specific requirements needed for participation in fieldwork including but not limited to pre-placement orientations, screenings, and/or trainings. The OTA program is not responsible for obtaining an alternate placement in the event that a student does not comply with these pre-placement requirements.

6. The student shall follow the policies, rules and standards of practice of the fieldwork site [hospital/agency/school, etc.]

7. The student shall follow all of the OTA Program’s policies, outlined in the OTA Student Handbook and Level 2 Fieldwork Manual during fieldwork.

8. The student shall maintain as confidential all patient/client/student records and all other data to which the student has access within the facility.

9. The student shall accept individual and independent assignments requested or assigned by fieldwork supervisor/educator.

10. The student shall review and acknowledge the evaluation(s) conducted by fieldwork supervisor(s)/educator(s) regarding his/her fieldwork performance and ability to function within the facility/program as an OTA student. The student shall respond professionally to feedback and evaluations. If a student believes he or she is evaluated unfairly, the student shall follow the communications policy and grievance policy outlined in this handbook and in the college’s student handbook.

11. The student shall be responsible for supplying own uniforms, or required dress as indicated by fieldwork site.

12. The Institution or College may remove any student from the fieldwork site upon reasonable notice. The fieldwork site may, without notice, unilaterally remove the student whose continued presence threatens the clients, staff, policies or programs of the site. In the event of such removal, the fieldwork site will immediately contact NSCC’s Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and promptly provide the college with a written explanation of the reason for such actions.

13. In the event of injury or episodic illness, the student shall be responsible for payment of health care services provided by the fieldwork site and/or own health care provider.

14. The student shall, for all purposes, be deemed independent contractors and not employees of the fieldwork site, but, nevertheless, shall abide by all applicable policies and procedures of the fieldwork site.
All students must provide evidence of HEALTH INSURANCE and maintain health insurance throughout one’s enrollment in the OTA Program.

A HEALTH PACKET is provided to each student at the OTA Program’s Incoming Orientation meeting. The forms within this health packet must be completed by a physician or nurse practitioner and submitted to the Division of Health Professions prior to the beginning of the first semester. The specific date for submission will be posted on the OTA Program Health Packet. Each student is responsible for keeping a copy of his/her own completed packet for personal needs and back up. Throughout a student’s enrollment in the OTA Program, complete and updated health records are required to participate in Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences.

LIABILITY INSURANCE is required to participate in fieldwork. Students will not be permitted to begin fieldwork without proof of liability insurance.

- Insurance must be purchased annually and coverage must be $1,000,000 to $3,000,000.
- Students must access the (HPSO) website Healthcare Providers Service Organization at www.hpsocom and complete the application as specified.
- The cost of obtaining liability insurance can be found on the HPSO website.
CRIMINAL OFFENSE RECORD INVESTIGATIONS (CORI) AND SEXUAL OFFENSE RECORD INVESTIGATIONS (SORI) are required for participation in fieldwork.

- As an OTA student you will be required to undergo a State of MA CORI/SORI check prior to engaging in a level 1 or level 2 fieldwork.
- NSCC Human Resources Department will direct you in this process at the incoming orientation. In addition, OTA students will be required to undergo a CORI/SORI check annually while enrolled in the program.
- In addition, a student may be required to undergo a specific fieldwork facility's CORI/SORI check prior to engaging in a Level 1 or Level 2 fieldwork. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator will direct students in this process if indicated.
- A student must pass all required CORI/SORI to remain enrolled in the OTA Program as fieldwork is an integral program requirement.

DRUG SCREENING – OTA students may be required to undergo a drug screening analysis in order to be eligible for participation in fieldwork internship(s). The drug screening(s) may be random or for cause, and the student will be notified if they are required to undergo such drug screening(s). Students who either fail to pass, or refuse to submit to, or fail to schedule and take a drug screening analysis within the designated time frame required in the notification of drug screening, will be deemed ineligible for fieldwork placement, which will affect their status in the program.

OTHER SCREENING MEASURES including but not limited to fingerprints may be required by the Fieldwork site prior to a student’s participation. The academic fieldwork coordinator will direct students in the process of all screening measures. A student must pass all screening measures to remain enrolled in the OTA Program as fieldwork is an integral program requirement.
STUDENT DATA FORMS are provided by the OTA Program and are to be completed by the student. These forms are used for urgent and/or emergency notification and include current phone numbers, address, health insurance, health care provider and emergency contact information. One form remains in the student's folder, and the duplicate forms are sent to assigned fieldwork sites. STUDENTS MUST NOTIFY ACADEMIC FIELDWORK COORDINATOR OF ANY CHANGES IN THEIR PERSONAL DATA INFORMATION.

NOTE: Failure to comply with the above fieldwork requirements will prevent a student’s engagement in fieldwork and result in failure of the course.

*Fieldwork sites will not be procured/confirmed until all required forms are submitted.
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

PROGRAM HONOR CODE

Program faculty expect all students to perform with honesty and respect for the teaching/learning relationships that are necessary for the success of the educational process. During examinations, there is no special seating assignment (unless specified by the instructor) and it is expected that students will complete all tests/quizzes/exams and other classroom assignments by relying solely upon their own understanding of the material and upon their own ability to communicate this understanding.

All students are expected to act within the standards of academic honesty established by the College. For additional information on all of the College’s policies, including but not limited to computer use, copyright, and student rights and responsibilities, refer to the College Catalog and Student Handbook.
STUDENT CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

All students in the OTA Program are expected to adhere to all of the policies and procedures related to student rights, responsibilities, conduct, disciplinary action and due process stated in the NSCC Catalog and Student Handbook. These policies apply for both the academic and fieldwork experiences. Students are also expected to adhere to the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and Ethics Standards published by the American Occupational Therapy Association and introduced to each student in the ORIENTATION TO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY course (OTA 101).

The OTA Program stresses professional behavior throughout the academic and fieldwork components of the program. As a future OTA practitioner, each student must display the professional attitudes and behaviors expected within the occupational therapy profession. Academic preparation for entrance into the occupational therapy profession includes the development of these professional attitudes and behaviors. Feedback regarding professional attitude and behavior will be provided throughout the program via peer, faculty, and field supervisor assessments.

Each student must demonstrate professional behavior through the process of becoming an entry level Occupational Therapy Assistant. Professional behavior includes but is not limited to:

1. Being courteous and respectful towards clients, their families, facility staff, fellow students and faculty/staff of NSCC. This includes verbal and non-verbal (body language) communication.

2. Performing procedures, administering therapy, and completing assigned work in accordance with established standards, policies and procedures.

3. Demonstrating the ability to work independently and collaboratively with diverse groups of people in academic and fieldwork activities.
4. Constructively utilizing scheduled and free time for optimal learning (i.e., using lab and clinical time effectively).

5. Demonstrating appropriate behavior/approaches to individuals requiring services, including family members and staff. Appropriate behavior includes maintaining a comfortable personal space, sustaining eye contact, identifying self and status, stating instructions clearly and concisely with appropriate pronunciation, using a friendly and pleasant tone of voice, and respectful language.

6. Maintaining client confidentiality at all times both in and out of facility.

7. Following established protocols pertaining to health and safety of all persons, including infection control, emergency and evacuation procedures, and practice activities within the role of the OTA. (Refer to the College’s and fieldwork facility’s policy and procedure manuals; AOTA’s official documents including the Code of Ethics and Ethics Standards, Standards of Practice for Occupational Therapy, Guidelines for Supervision, Roles and Responsibilities During the Delivery of Occupational Services and Licensure Regulations, etc.)

8. Adhering to attendance and promptness policies.

9. Accepting and responding constructively to feedback provided by faculty and fieldwork supervisors.

NOTE: Students who do not demonstrate expected levels of professional behavior during class, fieldwork or service learning (as reported and documented by a classroom instructor or fieldwork supervisor) will be placed on a learning contract. If a student fails to comply with the established learning contract, he/she will be dismissed from the program.
The student is expected to assume RESPONSIBILITY for the academic learning process by:

- Personally contacting/notifying each instructor prior to absence or tardiness and following up with each instructor to review material/experiences missed.
- Bringing necessary and appropriate materials to class in preparation for classroom participation.
- Reading assigned chapters, articles, etc. in preparation for classroom discussion.
- Completing all required assignments in a timely manner.
- Understanding course syllabi, course requirements, and course guidelines.
- Returning borrowed items (i.e., books, media, and activity supplies) the next day after use.
- Properly maintaining classrooms and laboratory areas and returning supplies and equipment to designated areas.

The student will DEMONSTRATE INTEREST in the academic process by:

- Seeking and utilizing suggestions and constructive feedback from field supervisors and faculty.
- Participating in class discussions and interactions.
- Responding to needs of peers, clients, and faculty.
- Using class time to work in groups, read assigned material, and discuss information with peers and instructors.
- Collaborating with students and with faculty and other professionals appropriately.
- Actively listening, by expressing points of views when appropriate and by reiterating what has been said to clarify understanding.
- Maintaining attention and displaying appropriate body language.
- Avoiding side conversations during class.
- Avoiding use of cell phones and personal electronic devices during class.
The student will assume RESPONSIBILITY for the field experience learning process by:

- Notifying the field experience supervisor/educator prior to absence or tardiness and also notifying the academic fieldwork coordinator.
- Contacting Academic Fieldwork Coordinator in a timely manner if fieldwork supervisor has expressed concern regarding student’s performance as well as to share any personal concerns related to fieldwork experience.
- Completing assigned tasks initiated by the field supervisor/educator that are appropriate in developing competency in area of expected performance.
- Asking questions from appropriate persons responsible for placement regarding the experience.
- Following dress code requested by fieldwork facilities.
- Abiding by the policies and procedure of fieldwork settings.
- Maintaining clinical area, supplies, and equipment.

The student will demonstrate INTEREST in the field experience learning process by:

- Seeking and utilizing suggestions and constructive feedback from field supervisors and faculty.
- Participating in clinical discussion and interaction when indicated.
- Responding to the needs of peers, clients, staff, and faculty when indicated.
- Utilizing time when not involved with direct observation or intervention (with supervisor approval) to read related material and discuss related questions with appropriate persons.
- Collaborating with clients, families, OT staff, and other professionals.
- Researching appropriate evaluation and intervention methods and discussing application of programming.
- Actively listening by expressing appropriate personal views and reiterating what has been said to clarify understanding.
- Avoiding use of cell phones and personal electronic devices during fieldwork.
In order to comply with the Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics and Ethics Standards, the student will demonstrate professional ethics in the academic and field work settings by:

- Maintaining confidentiality of information regarding clients, peers and other professionals.
- Respecting authority of supervision in class and fieldwork by:
  - being flexible to changes,
  - performing assignments when required,
  - seeking out assigned faculty or supervisor for direction, and/or clarification,
  - being open to constructive feedback,
  - modifying behavior in response to feedback/supervision,
  - separating personal needs from client or class needs,
  - handling personal and professional frustrations.
- Respecting the human and non-human components of the learning environment by:
  - listening to the opinion of classmates
  - maintaining attention to all speakers
  - caring for equipment and supplies
  - abiding by the classroom behavior statement
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

POLICY REGARDING ATTENDANCE AND PROMPTNESS

1. Attendance and promptness are mandatory for all classes and fieldwork. Attendance and promptness will be monitored.

2. An **excused absence** from class is one in which the student has planned and given advance notice to the instructor or the student notifies the instructor by phone or email the morning of any unplanned absence (or prior to scheduled class). Student must personally notify the instructor for each course in which he/she will be absent.

3. An **excused absence** from field placement is one in which the student has planned and given advance notice to the field supervisor/educator and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator or the student notifies the field supervisor and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator by phone the morning of any unplanned absence.

4. An **unexcused absence** from class or field placement is one in which the student fails to follow the excused absence policy.

5. Students are allowed a **maximum of 2 excused absences*** from OTA course which meet 1x per week and a maximum of **3 excused absences** from OTA courses which meet more than 1x pr week. With each additional absence beyond the allowable limit, 5 points will be deducted from the student’s final grade. If a course meets 2x over the same day, the absence will be counted as one.

6. Each unexcused absence will result in an automatic 5 point deduction from the student's final grade.

7. A tardy student is considered tardy if he/she arrives to class after the instructor has taken attendance or leaves before the class officially ends.

8. A tardy student is expected to enter and/or exit the classroom in an undisruptive manner. Faculty will dismiss the student if entrance/exit is in any way disruptive to the class and dismissal will be considered an unexcused absence.

9. If tardy more than 3x for any OTA course, 5 points (per each tardiness) will be deducted from the student's final grade.

10. If tardy or absent, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain all information missed.

* An excused absence includes any reason for which a student misses class and/or fieldwork including illness, appointment, car trouble, child care, etc.
FIELDWORK ATTENDANCE AND PROMPTNESS POLICY

1. The student must complete the required number of fieldwork hours as evidenced by course requirements. Pre-placement orientations are not included as fieldwork hours.

2. If the student is unable to report to the Fieldwork site at the required time, then he/she must notify the Fieldwork Supervisor at least one (1) hour prior to that required time, and MUST NOTIFY THE ACADEMIC FIELDWORK COORDINATOR THAT SAME DAY.

3. It will be the responsibility of the student to arrange make-up time with the Field Supervisor/Educator. Make-up time must be completed as soon as possible after the absence at the convenience of the Field Supervisor/Educator. All make-up time must be completed in order to successfully pass.

4. An unexcused absence will result in the student being suspended from the field experience. Continuation in the fieldwork experience will be determined collaboratively with the student, academic fieldwork coordinator, field supervisor/educator, and department chair. A student can be terminated from fieldwork based on an unexcused absence and fail the field experience.

* An "UNEXCUSED ABSENCE" occurs when a student misses an entire fieldwork day:

   1. without prior approval of the Field Supervisor/Educator and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.

   - OR -

   2. without personally and directly notifying the Field Supervisor/Educator and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator

5. Repeated tardiness is sufficient cause for suspension and/or termination and failure in Field Experience.
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
HEALTH PROFESSIONS  

CLINICAL/FIELDWORK CANCELLATION POLICY

1. If mandatory college closing (classes cancelled) is required prior to the start of scheduled clinical/fieldwork, the student will not be required to attend clinical/fieldwork for the duration of the cancellation.

2. If mandatory college closing (classes cancelled) during the day/evening, after the student has arrived at clinical/fieldwork site, the student is required to complete assigned procedures prior to leaving the site. The student must ensure patient safety is not compromised and documentation is completed.

3. If mandatory college closing (classes cancelled) is required, the student may have to make up hours/time in order to fulfill program requirements (per program policy).

4. If classes are not cancelled, but there is questionable weather, the student will use their own discretion as to their ability to travel safely to and from clinical/fieldwork site. Should the student decide that travel is not prudent, they are to follow the program’s attendance policy regarding absence from clinical/fieldwork.

5. Students may attend clinical/fieldwork on holidays that are not typically observed by health care agencies (i.e. Evacuation Day, College Professional Day, Patriot’s Day, and Bunker Hill Day) or any other day at the program’s discretion.

6. Students may access the college adverse weather/emergency closings by:
   - calling the college adverse weather hotline at (978) 762-4200
   - accessing the college website
   - local television and radio stations

This policy should be communicated to all clinical affiliates and to all students.

Revised 05/2009
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
(referred to as “College” below)

CLINICAL/FIELDWORK WAIVER FORM

I, ___________________________________________ (student name), a student at North Shore Community College enrolled in a Health Professions Program, understand and agree that I am fully responsible for the cost of any physical, emotional, or property injury resulting from my transportation, safe conduct to and from the Clinical Agency for/or my participation in clinical activities and thus, will in no way hold the College or faculty/staff member responsible for any injuries and/or losses incurred during transit or while participating in any clinical activities including but not limited to medical and dental expenses incurred as a result of my participation in this program; and, further, I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the said College against any and all claims, damages and liabilities arising therefrom.

Student Signature: ________________________________________________________________

PROGRAM Please circle the Program you are enrolled in:

Medical Assisting Nurse Education Occupational Therapy Assistant
Physical Therapist Assistant
Practical Nursing Radiologic Technology Respiratory Care Surgical Technology
Veterinary Technology

Date: __________________________

Parent’s consent if the student is under 18 years of age:

________________________________________________________________________
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

POLICY REGARDING ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

1. All assignments (papers, reports, projects, evaluation forms, etc.) are due on the date specified by the classroom instructor, academic fieldwork coordinator and/or field supervisor.

2. Late assignments will automatically be deducted 5 points for each consecutive class or fieldwork day beyond the assigned due date. Assignments will not be accepted beyond two (2) weeks of initial due date – NO EXCEPTIONS.

3. If a student is absent (with an excused absence) on a test day, he/she must make arrangements with the instructor to take the test on or before the next class day. If the test is not made up by the next class day, the grade for that test becomes a zero. Make up tests may be different or may include an alternative assignment.

4. Any test missed by an unexcused absence will automatically be graded zero.

5. Students under academic accommodations must take each test on the test date scheduled, making arrangements to begin and/or end test within scheduled class time. Failure to do so will result in a zero.

6. All students are expected to abide by the academic honesty policies of the college with respect to assignment and test completion. Dishonest academic behavior includes, but is not limited to, cheating and plagiarism.

7. Test questions are constructed by the instructor and, therefore, are the property of the instructor. Major tests will be returned to students for review, but not to keep. Students can access completed tests during faculty office hours throughout the semester.

* Serious and extenuating circumstances that interfere with compliance to above policies must be discussed with the instructor in advance to avoid penalty.

*NOTE: The OTA Program faculty collects student samples of classroom assignments and tests as evidence of meeting accreditation standards established by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE).
A student must complete all OTA courses with a "C" or better grade or a “pass” grade for OTA 204 and OTA 208 [Level 2 Fieldwork courses are pass/fail]. Although a "D" is generally considered a passing grade by the college, a "D" is not a passing grade for an OTA Program course. Receiving a failing grade ("C-", "D" or "F") in an OTA Program course will prevent a student from progressing on to the next sequence of courses. This interruption in course/program sequence requires the student to follow the OTA Program’s Readmission Process and Procedures. The student should also keep in mind that the receipt of a course grade below a "C" may not be transferred for credit into a four year college program of study.

**GRADING POLICY FOR CREDIT COURSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>93-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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<td>60-62</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>below 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STUDENT RECORDS**

Student records containing relevant information pertaining to a student’s admission, enrollment and achievement in the OTA Program (copy of submitted health records, acknowledgement forms, waiver forms, liability insurance, fieldwork performance evaluations, readmission forms, etc.) will be maintained in a secure file within the OTA Department Chair's office. This record will be maintained for five (5) years after a student’s program completion/graduation. After five years, the student’s program file will be securely disposed. Students are advised to maintain their own copies of information/documentation within their student program files. Final grades and credits for courses will be recorded on each student’s official transcript and permanently maintained by the college.
Criteria for Good Academic Standing and Satisfactory Progress
To be considered in good academic standing and to be making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or certificate, a matriculated student must:
1. Maintain a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 2.0 OR ABOVE,
   AND
2. Successfully earn 60% of credits attempted each semester. (Credits attempted are defined as credits enrolled at the end of the Add-Drop period.)

Please note: the criteria for maintaining financial aid eligibility is different. Please refer to the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress policy on page 85 of the NSCC Student Handbook for further information.

Academic Probation
A student who does not meet the above standards of a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 2.0 or above and successfully earn 60% of credits attempted at the end of a semester will be placed on academic probation and will receive a letter of notification. Academic Probation directs a student to meet with an advisor to review the student’s academic progress and to discuss use of the college student support services in order to improve academic performance.

Academic Suspension
A student who does not meet the above requirements of a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 2.0 or above and successfully earn 60% of credits attempted for two consecutive semesters will be placed on academic suspension. Suspension means that a student is prohibited from enrolling in the College until he/she has met with an Academic Review Board to discuss academic progress and to receive permission to re-enroll. The Academic Review Board may make re-enrollment contingent on a student taking specific steps to help ensure future academic success. A student must fulfill all requirements set by the board.
**Academic Review Board**

A suspended student must appear in person before an Academic Review Board in order to receive permission to re-enroll. The College recognizes that special or unusual circumstances can affect academic performance. These mitigating circumstances will be considered by the Review Board in granting a student permission to re-enroll. Therefore a student is required to bring a written statement explaining any important information the Board should know before making its decision. The composition of Review Boards will be determined by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. If a student so desires, the President of the Student Senate or his/her designee may attend the Review Board meeting. The Academic Review Board can grant permission to re-enroll but does not make decisions regarding financial aid eligibility. Students who have been granted permission to re-enroll will need to contact the Financial Aid office to discuss the status of their financial aid.

**Academic Warning System**

By the third week of the semester and again by mid-term faculty will report students who are not attending class and/or are having academic difficulty. Faculty may also submit on-line alerts at any point in the semester for students having difficulty in their classes. Students registered for 15 week classes will be notified in writing of early and mid-term alert reports and will be advised to take appropriate action.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, REFER TO THE ACADEMIC POLICIES FOR CREDIT PROGRAMS LOCATED IN THE CURRENT COLLEGE CATALOG AND STUDENT HANDBOOK.**

**NOTE:** Active versions of the OTA Program must be completed so that graduates are prepared with current knowledge and skills for competent entry level practices as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. In addition, students are expected to complete all program requirements, including Level 2 Fieldwork, within 4 years of entering the OTA Program.
All students are assigned an OTA program code upon acceptance to the OTA Program. Accepted students are required to attend the mandatory incoming student orientation(s) where representatives from the Enrollment Center, Student Financial Services, Division of Health Professions, Human Resources and the OTA Program review the NSCC website, the course registration process in Pipeline, cost of attending NSCC, financial aid, health insurance availability, health and immunization requirements, CORI/SORI process, study skills, professionalism and program specific information required to prepare students for engagement in the OTA Program.

Students who do not attend the mandatory incoming student orientation(s) may forfeit their enrollment in the OTA Program. And, accepted students who find themselves in situations where they cannot commit to enrollment in the OTA Program as planned must formally notify the OTA Department Chair in writing (letter or email) to request a program withdrawal or deferral. Students can only defer their acceptance once to the following year.

Information on current charges (tuition and fees, health insurance costs, etc.), payment options, financial aid and refund policies can be found on the college’s Student Financial Services web page. All costs associated with attending NSCC are subject to change.

NOTE: Active versions of the OTA Program must be completed so that graduates are prepared with current knowledge and skills for competent entry level practices as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. In addition, students are expected to complete all program requirements, including Level 2 Fieldwork, within 4 years of entering the OTA Program. OTA-coded courses that have been completed more than 4 years ago must be repeated in order to meet OTA program graduation requirements.
TRANSFER CREDIT

Students wishing to transfer credits from other accredited academic institutions must meet the requirements and follow the procedure outlined on the Registrar Office web page [Transferring Courses into NSCC].

Authorized staff within the Enrollment Center conducts the official review for transfer credit of the general education course requirements within the OTA curriculum [CMP101, CMP104-150, PSY102, PSY118, BIO103, BIO104].

The OTA Department Chair conducts the official review of occupational therapy coursework for transfer credit. In addition to the official transcripts, students must submit course syllabi, course assignments and related course materials so that a careful and complete assessment of previous coursework can be performed to assure the OTA accreditation standards, competencies and requirements of applicable OTA courses are met. When feasible, contract learning experiences (formal course work) may be designed to combine with previous occupational therapy coursework for potential transfer credit.
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

STUDENT ADVISEMENT

Each OTA student is assigned an OTA faculty member as an academic advisor. Students should have “OTA Faculty” identified as their primary advisor in Pipeline. If a student has been assigned to a non-OTA faculty advisor, please bring this to the attention of the OTA Department Chair and the error will be corrected. The OTA Department Chair (or faculty advisors) will notify each student of his/her advisor assignment.

The role of the advisor is to:

- review your degree evaluation in Pipeline,
- counsel you on course selection,
- make referrals for you to appropriate student services,
- develop an academic plan that is most appropriate for you; i.e., advising on the number of credits that you will likely be able to manage successfully, taking into account your other responsibilities with job, family, etc.

Office hours for the Department Chair and Faculty Members are posted outside their office doors. If you have a conflict with their schedules, you must bring this to the attention of the faculty member and an attempt will be made to provide for a more suitable time to meet.

*NOTE: Students should meet with their primary OTA faculty advisor before altering any established course schedule (i.e. before withdrawing from a course, adding a course, etc). Alteration of a schedule may interrupt the student’s curriculum sequence and warrant readmission.
PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL

A student may withdraw from the OTA Program at any time. Prior to taking action, it is in the best interest of the student to consult with his or her academic advisor and the Department Chair concerning withdrawal. To officially withdraw from the OTA Program, a letter or email containing reasons why the decision to withdraw was made must be addressed to the Department Chair. It is then the student’s responsibility to officially withdraw from all registered courses. Withdrawal from courses can be conducted online through Pipeline or students can be assisted by staff in the Enrollment Center. Depending on the timing of a student’s withdrawal, he/she may or may not be eligible for a refund. Please refer to the college’s refund policy on the Student Financial Services web page.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL

With the exception of Level 2 Fieldwork (OTA 204 and OTA 208), a student may officially withdraw from any full semester (15 week course) course before the twelfth week of the semester and receive a "W" grade. Withdrawal dates are posted to the college’s academic calendar available on the web page. A STUDENT SHOULD MEET WITH HIS/HER COURSE INSTRUCTOR AND OTA FACULTY ADVISOR FOR ADVISEMENT PRIOR TO WITHDRAWING FROM ANY COURSE. Failure to officially withdraw may result in an "F" grade; and withdrawal may affect academic standing and financial aid. Withdrawal from OTA courses will result in an interruption of a student’s curriculum sequence which requires readmission. Please refer to the Readmission Policy and Specific Readmission Process and Procedures of the OTA Program in this handbook.
READMISSION POLICY

College Policy:

The following students must apply for readmission prior to registration in any given semester:
students who have not been matriculated and enrolled in the College within the previous five
years; students who have graduated from the College; and students in selective admission
programs (Nurse Education, Physical Therapist Assistant, Occupational Therapy Assistant,
Radiologic Technology, Respiratory Care, Medical Assisting Certificate, Veterinary
Technology, Surgical Technician Certificate, and Practical Nursing Certificate) who have
interrupted their sequence of professional courses with a course withdrawal, course failure,
and/or semester stop out. Students in health professions programs seeking readmission
must meet current Program and College admission requirements, and follow the specific
policies and procedures defined by individual programs*. Readmission to health professions
programs is not automatically guaranteed. If readmitted, students are permitted only one
readmission to their program on a space available basis with approval by the Program
Director/Department Chair.

* Individual Program policies and procedures are documented in program manuals/handbooks.
OTA Program Readmission Policy

In accordance with the college's readmission policy, all matriculated students have one opportunity to be readmitted to the OTA Program. Readmission will be based on academic and fieldwork performance, personal circumstances, documented plan for future success and space availability. Depending on the circumstances described below, readmission to the OTA Program is completed through an internal process and procedures or through formal reapplication to the program following all steps outlined in the current OTA Application packet. The internal process of OTA program readmission is intended for students who individually withdraw from a course, stop-out for a maximum of one semester, or fail a course with advisor and department chair notification and/or recommendation. Students who stop-out of the program for more than one semester must formally reapply to the OTA program following the current version of the OTA application packet. Students dismissed from the program are not eligible to engage in the internal readmission process but can pursue formal readmission following the OTA application packet requirements.

Students who fail to consistently comply with OTA program policies and standards of performance will be required to engage in and sign a learning contract prepared by the OTA Department Chair and appropriate faculty/staff. This learning contract will define the performance expectations for the student and outline the conditions (student performances/behaviors) for which program dismissal may occur. Students wishing to return to the OTA program after being dismissed by the Department Chair must officially reapply to the program by following and completing all steps of the current OTA Application packet.

Students who are readmitted must meet current program requirements including technical standards, updated health forms, proof of liability insurance, dependable transportation, etc. for participation in fieldwork. Students who have utilized their one opportunity for readmission (internal process or formal reapplication) will be terminated from the OTA program upon subsequent failure to comply with program policies and standards of performance or subsequent interruption in curriculum sequence including course failure, course withdrawal and/or stop out.
Internal Process and Procedures for OTA Program Readmission

A student not dismissed by the OTA Department Chair but who has interrupted his/her sequence of courses as designed in the option of study for which he/she initially enrolled (part-time, traditional or accelerated) by any of the following:

1. course failure
2. course withdrawal
3. one semester stop-out

The formal internal readmission process and procedures require the student to initiate and complete all of the following steps:

1. Set up an initial meeting with the OTA Program Department Chair and faculty (those teaching designated courses) within 10 days of a course withdrawal and/or failure and within one (1) month of the end of the “stop out” semester, ie: in April for spring semester, July for summer semester, November for fall semester.

2. Submit a detailed letter addressing specific changes he/she will make and/or have made to enhance academic success if readmitted to the OTA Program within 10 days of meeting with Program Director and faculty.

3. Participate in a follow-up meeting with the OTA Department Chair to discuss the determination of his/her readmission status and conditions of continued enrollment (if indicated) within 10 days of receipt of letter.

4. Complete and submit the OTA Program Readmission Form to Enrollment Services.

NOTE:

Any student granted readmission after failing or withdrawing from a Level 2 Fieldwork course (OTA204 or OTA208) must agree to, sign and follow an individual learning contract in order to engage in a repeat fieldwork experience. Cumulative development of practice skills and consistency of performance is expected of Level 2 Fieldwork students to demonstrate competence as an entry-level occupational therapy assistant. Therefore, successful completion of the repeat Level 2 Fieldwork will be determined from a combination of the student’s performance as rated by the fieldwork supervisor and the student’s performance related to the specific items identified on his/her individualized learning contract as rated by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. Failure of the student to comply with any aspect of this learning contract may result in dismissal and/or failure of the [repeat] Level 2 Fieldwork experience, regardless of satisfactory performance reported by site supervisor. The learning contract for a repeat Level 2 Fieldwork experience will be based on the following categories of performance, which will be individualized for each student based on his/her previous fieldwork performance.
• Fundamentals of Practice – Ethics and Safety

• Professional Behaviors – Self-Responsibility; Work Behaviors; Interpersonal Skills; Time Management; Response to Feedback

• Communication – Verbal and Non-Verbal

• OT Intervention – Planning and Implementation

• Communication with AFWC - Each student will be responsible for submitting weekly email updates to the OTA Program Academic Fieldwork Coordinator regarding his/her performance relative to each specific item noted on his/her individualized learning contract. The specific due date(s) and time for submission of weekly updates will be documented on the student’s individualized learning contract.
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

OTA Program Internal Readmission Form

I, _____________________ have interrupted my sequence of courses with a: (please circle)

Name of Student

- Course withdrawal
  Course Number/Title ________________________

- Course failure
  Course Number/Title ________________________

- One semester stop-out
  Reason for Stop-out _________________________

I have engaged in the internal readmission process and procedures defined by the OTA Program and acknowledge the following decision and related implications (please circle):

- Readmission granted – Final opportunity to continue in the OTA program. Enrollment and Student Records office will file notice of this one readmission in student’s record and maintain OTA program code.

- Readmission denied – Unable to continue in the OTA program. Program code will be changed to “unspecified”, which may impact financial aid status. Student advised to consult financial aid counselor.

Student’s Signature: ___________________________________

Student’s ID #: _______________________________________

DATE: __________________

OTA Program Department Chair’s Signature: ________________________________

DATE: __________________
APPLICATION TO GRADUATE

In order for a student to graduate, an application to graduate form must be completed and submitted to the Enrollment and Student Records office the semester before scheduled graduation. Application to Graduate forms are obtained from the Enrollment and Student Records office and are also available online within the Registrar’s Office web page. Students must complete the form and submit it by the required deadline. After receiving the completed form, the Enrollment and Student Records office will review the student’s academic record and will respond to the student as to whether all courses required for graduation have been completed.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for a degree, all NSCC students must have: earned at least 60 hours of credit with CQPA of 2.00 or higher; completed at least 1 semester hours of work in residence at North Shore; fulfilled all requirements designated in the applicable active program requirements; met the particular detailed career course and grading requirements in the curriculum selected; and met all other specific requirements set by the College.

NOTE: Active versions of the OTA Program must be completed so that graduates are prepared with current knowledge and skills for competent entry level practice as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. And, students are expected to successfully complete all OTA program requirements, including Level 2 FW, within 4 years of entering the program. OTA-coded courses that have been completed more than 4 years ago must be repeated in order to meet OTA program graduation requirements.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE REFER TO THE COLLEGE CATALOG AND STUDENT HANDBOOK.
COMMUNICATIONS, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND GRIEVANCE POLICY

A student who wishes to discuss an issue of academic or professional concern should adhere to the following procedure:

1. The student should first have a discussion with the instructor who is responsible for the course in which there is a concern. Most circumstances that arise can and should be addressed with the instructor who is directly involved. Rarely, will situations occur that require more than a calm, open, and professional discussion between the student and his/her instructor. If another faculty member is contacted before any discussion is had with the instructor in question, then the student will be referred, immediately, back to the instructor for the appropriate discussion/resolution.

2. If, after approaching the faculty member with whom there is a concern, the student does not believe that the issue has been resolved in a reasonable and satisfactory way, the student may discuss it with the person who supervises the instructor. (See the organization chart on the following page.) The supervisor will attempt to gather all necessary information from all available sources in order to determine the appropriate resolution of the problem.

Allegations of mistreatment related to the abridgment of a student’s rights can be made as a complaint or grievance. A student who wishes to file a formal complaint or grievance against the OTA Program or any faculty/staff member within the program must follow the grievance procedures outlined in the college’s Student Handbook.
Note: All offices are located within the Health Professions Faculty Suite accessed through DH318
Disability Services:

Students with disabilities who anticipate the need for accommodations are encouraged to visit [www.northshore.edu/disability](http://www.northshore.edu/disability) and follow the outlined procedure to request services at least four weeks before the start of classes. Disability Services provides academic accommodations and services for students with disabilities so that these individuals have equal access to programs and activities. Through collaboration, Disability Services works toward assisting students in maximizing their academic potential, while also promoting self-awareness, self-advocacy, and ultimately, personal responsibility and independence.

For more information on Disability Services, please visit the website: [www.northshore.edu/disability](http://www.northshore.edu/disability).

TTY Danvers Campus 978-762-4140 Lynn Campus 781-477-2136
The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is a national professional organization, established in 1917 for the purpose of advancing and improving the quality of occupational therapy service.

Student membership is strongly encouraged and applications for membership are available on the AOTA website.

The annual conference of the AOTA is held each spring, usually in April during OT Month. At the conference, the Association of Student Delegates (ASD) provides the mechanism for the expression of student concerns and offers a way whereby students can have effective input into the affairs of the AOTA. The Pre-conference meetings have one representative from each educational program in the country; the representative is identified as the Delegate.

The OTA Program encourages student involvement in AOTA and the ASD. The NSCC student body of the OTA Program elects a representative each year to be the ASD Delegate. Financial support is received from the SOTA Club as available. The Delegate may have to share the financial costs of travel and housing.
ACOTE

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education
c/o Accreditation Department
American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)
4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200
Bethesda, MD  20814-3449
(301)652-2682
www.acoteonline.org

The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education is the accreditation agency for all entry level occupational therapy education programs including NSCC’s OTA Program.

NBCOT

National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT)
12 South Summit Avenue, Suite 100
Gaithersburg, MD 20877-4150
Phone: 301-990-7979; Fax: 310-869-8492
www.nbcot.org

The National Board of Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) is the independent national credentialing agency that certifies eligible persons as occupational therapists registered (OTR) and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTA). The NBCOT is not affiliated with the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). The mission of NBCOT is to serve the public interest by providing high standards for the certification of occupational therapy practitioners. NBCOT develops and administers the certification examination, based on current and valid standards that provide reliable indicators of competence for the practice of occupational therapy. Demonstrated continued competency is required for recertification every three years. NBCOT outlines the criteria for which recertification is based.
The Massachusetts Association of Occupational Therapy (MAOT) is the professional organization in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for those who practice and teach occupational therapy. Student membership is strongly encouraged and application forms can be found on the MAOT website.

SOTA

All OTA students are considered members of the Student Occupational Therapy Assistant (SOTA) Club and are encouraged to participate in:

1. fund raising activities
2. sharing knowledge and activities of the profession with NSCC’s student body and faculty
3. community service
4. providing visibility to the community

The college officially recognizes the SOTA club and an OTA faculty member serves as the club’s advisor. Student members elect officers and plan the club’s activities. Active members and leaders of the SOTA club may qualify for college service awards. An awards ceremony is held each spring.

NOTE: All occupational therapy assistant students are expected to develop leadership skills during their enrollment in the OTA Program. Appreciation for all professional associations and membership within AOTA and MAOT (or other state OT association) contributes to leadership development. And, active participation in the SOTA Club demonstrates leadership and a student’s commitment to service within the profession of occupational therapy.
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

OTA LABORATORY

The Occupational Therapy Laboratory is used primarily for laboratory practice and for selected therapeutic activities and modalities. Occasional lectures to clarify procedures may be warranted. An OTA Lab Safety Manual is within the laboratory and each student is provided a copy of this manual through their lab courses in ANGEL. Each student must sign and submit the “Student Acknowledgement Page” indicating his/her agreement to abide by all safety information, policies and procedures. Faculty will train students in safety measures and appropriate use of laboratory equipment when the specific equipment is introduced and practiced within each laboratory course.

The kitchen and laundry facilities are used for therapeutic practice and problem solving adaptations and modifications. The responsibility of the student is to make certain that all areas of the Lab are left clean and that the equipment used is put back in its appropriate storage place. Failure to maintain a clean and organized laboratory area will result in revocation of the student's use of the laboratory facility.

It is an expectation that students take advantage of open lab times to practice skills introduced in laboratory courses. Students are encouraged to use the laboratory beyond his/her scheduled class hours for practice of skills or to complete class assignments. The OTA Department Chair and Faculty have keys to the laboratory.

No items are to be removed from the laboratory unless permission is obtained from the OTA Faculty or the Department Chair.

SIMULATION

As part of laboratory experience, OTA students are required to fully participate in patient simulation scenarios designed to closely replicate the healthcare workforce environment, which will prepare students to perform required competencies and care for patients/clients. These scenarios are video recorded and viewed in debriefing sessions that allow for reflective learning, peer-to-peer learning, and evaluation by faculty/staff. Students are expected to respect and care for the patient simulators as if they were live patients, as well as to respect their fellow classmates during scenarios and debriefing sessions.
As a supplement to the main Library, a collection of Occupational Therapy resources are maintained in the OTA laboratory. Students may check out any of these resources with a faculty member. Also, the Department Chair and Faculty have resources in their offices that may be loaned to students with permission. Students are encouraged to independently seek out resources and utilize various resources for their academic and professional development.

A networked computer is available for student use in the laboratory. Educational software can be shared among all programs within the Division of Health Professions. Access to the College Library can be gained from this computer. All students are expected to abide by the College's Computer Use Policy found in the College Catalog and Student Handbook.
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STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNTS

North Shore Community College students are offered free student email accounts that can be accessed through "Campus Pipeline." All OTA students are required to have a NSCC email account and internet access in order to engage in web supported courses within the OTA curriculum. Computers are available on campus for student use as needed. Faculty will utilize student Pipeline accounts only for all email communications.

Students are expected to check their NSCC email accounts on a daily basis during the academic year and two times per week when on breaks, including summers and winter intersessions. Students are also expected to utilize their NSCC email accounts when communicating with faculty and fieldwork supervisors/educators or others affiliated with the OTA Program.

Technology-based communication is widely practiced in the occupational therapy profession and students are encouraged to join list serves available through the various professional organizations. In addition, students can readily communicate with OTA faculty through email and faculty email addresses are distributed to students with course materials, and included with links within ANGEL and Pipeline.
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TELEPHONE CALLS

Emergency calls necessitating student contact may be directed through the Health Professions office (978) 762-4000 ext. 4160. The administrative assistant will notify the student or faculty concerning any pertinent telephone messages. This phone line is offered to the student only for emergency telephone calls. Students are advised to obtain the specific number for their fieldwork site to be used for emergency contact.

A student is not allowed to initiate any outgoing calls from college telephones, or to receive calls on those phones. These phones may be used for official OTA Program business only when approved by the OTA Department Chair or Faculty.

CELL PHONE POLICY

The policy of the OTA Program requires ALL students to adjust their cell phone to “vibrate” or “silent” mode PRIOR to entering class. If your cell phone doesn’t have this feature, you are required to turn your cell off while class is in session. If an instructor allocates time for a break, you may access/make calls during this time only.

Under NO circumstances should you be text messaging or using your cell phone for some form of entertainment while class is in session. Violations will result in a five (5) point deduction from your final grade. Violations during an examination, test or quiz will result in an automatic zero for that exam/test/quiz and may result in program dismissal.

Violations of cell phone policy during fieldwork may result in termination from fieldwork and failure of the course for which the field experience is affiliated.
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
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CAMPUS SAFETY

The Campus Police Department coordinates campus safety and security in response to medical emergencies, fire/fire alarm emergencies, public safety emergencies and environmental emergencies.

Students are directed to the Campus Police web page for further information related to emergency situations and procedures for campus evacuation.

In the wake of recent campus shootings across the nation, the college has added an Emergency Number to report potentially violent situations. This emergency number is (781) 477-2100 and students should program this number into their cell phone. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to enroll in the college’s Emergency Messaging System to be notified of campus emergencies. Students can enroll in this system in pipeline under their “My Pipeline” tab.
Successful completion of, and graduation from the academic program, are separate processes from professional certification as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. The professional credential, COTA is obtained through national certification. Upon successful completion of all course requirements (Academic and Fieldwork) of NSCC’s OTA Program, students are eligible to sit for the national certification examination administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). Each student must personally complete the certification application process detailed on the NBCOT web site at http://www.nbcot.org.

The student is responsible for accessing the Candidate Handbook and completing all steps of the application process. All fees are posted in the NBCOT candidate handbook.

The certification exam application contains “character” questions to ensure that all OT practitioners meet standards of professional conduct. All candidates are required to answer these character questions and a felony conviction may affect a graduate’s ability to sit for the certification examination or attain state licensure. The Qualifications and Compliance Review Committee of NBCOT makes a determination to accept or deny the candidate’s opportunity to take the examination. NBCOT will conduct an early determination review upon request and applicants/students wishing clarification of their potential exam eligibility status are encouraged to contact NBCOT directly. Students wishing more information can access the NBCOT website at www.nbcot.org.

All certification examinations are administered “on demand” via computerized testing at designated test sites. Testing sites are posted on the NBCOT web site and it is the student’s responsibility to schedule his or her own testing after receiving NBCOT’s Authorization to Test letter.
LICENSURE

In addition to the national certification, the OTA who plans to work in Massachusetts must apply for state licensure. As with national certification, a felony conviction may affect a graduate’s ability to attain state licensure.

Massachusetts’s licensure applications are processed by Professional Credential Services, Inc. (PCS), P. O. Box 198689, Nashville, TN 37219-8689. Information and applications can be accessed via the web at www.pcshq.com. Requests to PCS can be made by telephone at (877) 887-9727 or by email at otlicense@pcshq.com. Licensure laws govern the practice of occupational therapy in Massachusetts and are overseen by the COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, DIVISON OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE - BOARD OF REGISTRATION IN ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, 1000 Washington Street, Suite 710, Boston, MA 02118-6100.

The board's phone number is (617) 727-3071 and calling hours are Monday through Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The website is www.mass.gov/dpl/boards/ah Email contact is Deta.Deans@state.ma.us

The Massachusetts licensure application procedure involves completing the form and submitting a fee to PCS (current fees are posted within the application). For proof of completion of the OTA Program at NSCC, an official transcript must accompany the application and indicate the graduation date and the degree granted. A temporary license may be granted initially (as long as candidate is waiting for results or is deemed eligible by NBCOT to take the certification examination) with transference to a permanent license upon receipt of successful (passing) examination results.

To practice as an OTA in other states, the graduating student should contact the appropriate licensing bureau within those states.
There is the possibility for a graduate to transfer to a professional level OT program. Professional entrance into the field of occupational therapy as an occupational therapist requires minimum of a master degree. NSCC OTA graduates have been admitted to fully accredited Occupational Therapy Programs within the local region including:

Boston University

New England Institute of Technology (OTA to OT Program)

*Salem State University (OTA to OT Program)

Touro University

Tufts University

University of New Hampshire

Worcester State University

* An official transfer agreement exists between NSCC’s OTA Program and SSU’s OT Program.
Students requesting a letter or reference (including electronic references from a potential employer, licensing board, or scholarship/award committee, etc.) from a faculty member or fieldwork supervisor may be asked to complete this form as part of the request. As a professional courtesy, requests for a reference letter should be submitted two weeks before due date.

Student Name: ____________________________________________________________

Date Requested:_____________  Due Date for Letter:__________________________

Reason for Reference (Job/Position/Scholarship, etc.):____________________________________

Academic History and GPA:_____________________________________________________

Personal Qualities and Attributes:______________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Accomplishments:____________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Awards/Scholarships:___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Work, Volunteer, and/or Extra-Curricular Experience:______________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

SOTA Club Involvement:_______________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

MAOT Member:  Yes__________  No____________

AOTA Member:  Yes__________  No____________

Other: Please comment on any other aspect you would like considered for inclusion in this reference letter – use back of page or attach additional information to this form.

Please check: I have included additional information:  YES_____   NO_____
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STUDENT AGREEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR
STUDENT HANDBOOK

It is the responsibility of each student to read the OTA Program Student Handbook. Failure to read the information contained in the Student Handbook will not be considered an excuse for non-compliance or lack of understanding.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program may change policies or revise information due to institutional and/or program circumstances. When indicated, students will be notified by the Department Chair. The OTA Student Handbook is posted to the OTA web page and to the OTA Program’s Group Angel site.

Each student is required to read, understand, and agree to comply with all policies stated in the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Student Handbook as well as all policies and procedures published in the college’s Student Handbook. An acknowledgment form is provided on the next page and must be signed by the student to indicate his or her agreement. This signed form will be maintained in the student’s program record. A student who does not submit his/her acknowledgement form to the Department Chair by the established due date will be restricted from class and fieldwork participation until submitted.
I, ________________________________, have received, reviewed, and understand the content in this Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Student Handbook. I am aware of and accept my responsibility to both the college and the program in regard to rules and regulations governing student performance. As a student of North Shore Community College’s OTA Program, I understand that I am to maintain the attitudes and behaviors reflected in these guidelines. My signature below indicates my commitment to abide by the policies and procedures within this handbook. My signature also indicates consent for selective copying of my work throughout the curriculum for program and accreditation review only.

_________________________________________  ___________
Student’s Signature                          Date

_________________________________________
Student’s Printed Name