Occupational Therapy – Student Handbook

The mission of the Department of Occupational Therapy is to foster a community of educators, scholars, evidence-based practitioners, and community leaders in the profession of occupational therapy who will generate, apply, and disseminate knowledge about living life to the fullest for the enhancement of individuals, groups, and populations. This following information should be referenced throughout your progress within your academic program.

Departmental Policies

Academic Difficulty

Please refer to the SHP Student Bulletin for School Process; https://shp.utmb.edu/asa/shp-bulletin.asp

Position

The philosophical beliefs of faculty members within the Department of Occupational Therapy shape a departmental position regarding faculty interactions with students who experience academic difficulty. We believe that each student has the capacity to reason, self-direct, and assume personal responsibility. We believe that the role of faculty is to facilitate the development of these capacities. We hope that the modeling of such facilitation for students will help them to develop similar interactional skills for future practice in client-centered environments.

Process

The departmental system of advisement is one in which students are expected to seek counsel from their faculty advisors if they need advice about or experience difficulties with academic performance or expectations for professional behavior. Sessions with advisors are documented when an advisor determines that a situation may have a significant impact on performance in either the academic or fieldwork portions of the program. Such documentation is included in the student's advising file. Situations warranting the awareness and support of all departmental faculty are shared, with the student's permission, in a confidential meeting.

When a student earns a failing grade in any course (grade below B), he or she is to contact the instructor for potential discussion of how he or she can improve performance going forward. The student should e-mail his or her advisor to inform about the failing grade and if desired can request a meeting to discuss study strategies. Students are encouraged at orientation and during the monthly Chair's Hour to approach their advisors in the event of receiving any failing grade so that they can be fully informed of all of the resources that are available to them.

Student Responsibilities

Occupational Therapy students are bound by the American Occupational Therapy Association's Occupational Therapy Code of Ethics, the University of Texas Medical Branch’s Professionalism Charter, the University of Texas Medical Branch Honor Pledge, and the University's policies related to academic integrity. The student is
expected to engage in behaviors during examinations that promote optimal performance, demonstrate personal integrity and veracity, and convey courtesy and respect for their colleagues.

Professionalism: In all courses, the student is expected to demonstrate professional behaviors. Because frequent absenteeism, tardiness, early departure, and behaviors distracting to others are unacceptable professional behaviors, they are discouraged. Unprofessional behaviors will be addressed and documented through the Department's professional development process.

Attendance: The occupational therapy curriculum is a professional program of study in which courses taken later in the curriculum build on and deepen knowledge, skills, and behaviors addressed earlier in the curriculum. In a similar manner, content and learning activities within a course build on and deepen knowledge, skills, and behaviors acquired earlier in that same course. Therefore, student attendance at ALL classes, laboratories, and other scheduled learning/educational activities or events is crucial. The Department of Occupational Therapy recognizes, however, that its students are adults who have many and sometimes conflicting responsibilities, and that there may be times when students will need to make their own decisions about their attendance and/or absence from educational activities.

A student who fails to attend any class or other scheduled learning/educational activity or event is responsible for the materials presented in that context, including assignments, examinations, announcements, etc. to the same extent as though the student had attended class. The course instructor may choose to require attendance as a component of the course grade. In addition, the course instructor has the discretion to determine, on an individual basis, how to handle any missed assignments, examinations, etc. due to student absences.

If a student misses 10% of any given course, their successful completion of the course will be reviewed by the instructor.

Class and Lab Preparation: In all courses, the student is expected to be self-directed in obtaining materials presented in class and lab (i.e., lecture notes, handouts) from classmates and arrange to make-up any in-class assignments with the instructor. The provision of make-up work is at the discretion of the instructor.

Written Assignments: The student is expected to submit written assignments on the day and time specified by the instructor. Failure to turn in an assignment by the scheduled time may result in up to a 10% deduction for each 24-hour period. Work will not be accepted more than 5 days late. Failure to complete all of an assignment may result in a grade of zero for that assignment or in an Incomplete for the course.

Examination Behaviors: Refer to the Department of Occupational Therapy Test Administration Policy for specific procedures related to this policy.

Course Policies

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A grade of B or better may be required in specific courses. Refer to course syllabi. The following temporary grades convert to F’s after the prescribed period: Incomplete “I”, Not Reported “NR”, In Progress “G”, and Retest Permitted “R”.

The effect of the grades of Withdrawn “W” and Permanent Incomplete “INC” are described below.

**Good Standing:** Students in good standing in the master’s programs in the School of Health Professions (SHP) must:

- Maintain a GPA of 3.0 during each semester or term
- Earn either a “B” (or better) or “P” (satisfactory grade) in all courses
- Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher (required for graduation)

**GPA below 3.0:** Students who earn a C will be placed on academic probation during the subsequent enrollment period. Students who achieve a GPA below 3.0, but with no unsatisfactory grade, will be placed on academic probation during the subsequent enrollment period (fall, spring, or summer semester; or year-long “D” term). They are required to earn a GPA of 3.0 or better during that probationary period in order to remove the academic probation.

**Academic Probation:** Regardless of overall GPA, students on academic probation who earn their first marginal or unsatisfactory grade are:

- Subject to dismissal
- May not proceed to the next enrollment period
- Are not eligible to graduate

Re-enrollment in the course in which the unsatisfactory grade was earned must be approved by the students’ departmental faculty and recommended to the SHP Grading and Promotion Committee. Students allowed to re-enroll are on academic probation.

**Rounding Policy:** All individual course grades will be calculated to two decimal points. The final grade will consist of the sum of all individual assignments and will not be subject to “rounding up” to a higher final grade. A final numerical grade of 80.00 or higher will be a B. A final numerical grade of 90.00 or higher will be an A.

**Subject to Dismissal:** Students are subject to dismissal if they:

- Earn a final course grade of “F”
- Earn a final grade of “C” in two courses
- Receive a second grade of W or INC in the same course, or more than two W’s or INC’s overall
- Receive a second unsatisfactory grade while on probation
- Fail to achieve a 3.0 GPA or above for the term they are on academic probation
- Fail to meet the conditions under which they were admitted to the program

**Academic Progress**

Information regarding the student’s academic progress in this course will be shared with their Academic Advisor and/or Department Chair. Students making unsatisfactory progress may be referred to the Office of Student Affairs for assistance.
University Statement on Equality, Tolerance, and Affirmative Action

Please indicate by the end of the 2nd week of the course if you will need accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (Public Law 101-336). If the need for ADA accommodations should arise during the semester you will need to make your request known to the Office of Academic & Student Affairs at shp.academicaffairs@utmb.edu.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The University of Texas Medical Branch, in compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations, strives to maintain an environment free from discrimination against individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, or veteran status. This includes all programs, facilities or services and applies to all employees and students, and anyone who utilizes UTMB facilities.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Kathy Rodriguez
Institutional Title IX Coordinator
Rebecca Sealy Building, Room 2.302
Phone: 409-772-2112
Email: Title.IX@utmb.edu

Lela Lockett-Ware
Institutional ADA Officer
Jamail Student Center, Room 2.118
Phone: 409-747-4818
Email: lvlocket@utmb.edu

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, visit https://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such an act.

Procedures to be followed in the event of alleged academic dishonesty are described in the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System, and the SHP Student Handbook found at www.shp.utmb.edu. Alleged academic dishonesty issues should be reported to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

Use of Electronic Devices

Students will have the opportunity to download lecture and lab materials onto laptops for their use during lectures and labs. Using a laptop for reasons other than educational purposes is disruptive to other learners in the classroom. Students who abuse this privilege will no longer be permitted to use a laptop during class time.
To support a positive learning environment for all students, cellular telephones should be set to the “off” position during class time. If students anticipate a call about a critical family or personal matter, they may speak with the course instructor prior to the beginning of class and set cellular telephones on “vibrate”.

**Course Evaluations**

Students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the performance of the instructor and course near the end of the course/semester. When submitting course evaluations students must follow the guidelines provided by the course instructor or department.

**Faculty Advisors**

Each student is assigned to a faculty advisor who assists the student with academic and professional development. Either the student or the faculty may request a counseling session at any time. Some faculty meet with their advisees on a regular basis; others meet only as needed.

**Faculty Advisors Roles**

**Point person for you when you have a life-challenge**
- Let advisor know if your attendance or engagement might be compromised by any situation/emergency
- Consult with advisor when you are facing any anticipated absence

**Point person for you when you are in academic difficulty**
- Let advisor know if life-events threaten academic success
- Consult with advisor when you are in difficulty in any course
- Inform advisor via e-mail of (1) any failing grade on any test or major project and (2) what your plans are to remedy it (departmental policy)

**Collaborator with you in your professional development**
- Keep advisor in the loop about your needs and plans for development
- Keep advisor in the loop when you get faculty feedback about changes that may be needed
- Use advisor as a resource in the process

**Resource person for academic questions**
- Ask advisor whom to contact for specific questions about academic processes and policies

**Consultant for your future education/practice plans**
- Brainstorm ideas for the future with advisor
- Let advisor help you connect with others who might give you insight

**Reference for scholarships, jobs, future educational programs**
- Ask advisor to write letters. Advisor will keep a copy of the first letter and revise it as need be
- Try to give advisor a couple of weeks’ notice if that’s possible

**Consultant for interpersonal challenges you face in the program**
- Report challenges to advisor with colleagues or peers, but expect that advisor will request their anonymity
- Advisor will not want to know names but can give you pointers and resources (Student Wellness)
Coach and mentor for giving the program your best effort

- Expect advisor to chat with you if advisor gets feedback that you might need some professional coaching or mentoring
- Visit with advisor to discuss any questions you have about whether your performance is on track
- If for some reason the advisor/student relationship is not working well make appointment with Department Chair. Concerns about program, faculty, or staff should be directed to Department Chair and not discussed with advisor or another faculty.

Email

During orientation, students are introduced to the campus e-mail system and assigned an e-mail address. Information regarding class schedules, room changes, campus activities, messages from faculty or staff, class materials, and grades may be distributed electronically. Students are expected to respond to all messages in a timely fashion and print required class materials in advance of the class session. Students are expected to check their e-mail daily.

General Objectives

Our graduates will:

- Value human occupation as central to wellness, self-actualization, and a sense of community
- Demonstrate sound clinical reasoning
- Engage in collaborative relationships that reflect sensitivity to culture and context
- Demonstrate a confluence of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor behaviors that are requisites to providing occupational therapy services within changing practice environments
- Incorporate professional values and behaviors that are congruent with the profession's standards and ethics
- Manage themselves and their services accountably, efficiently, and effectively
- Embrace an attitude of inquiry and a commitment to self-directed and lifelong learning
- Value community and professional service as part of good citizenship

And meet objectives articulated on the Fieldwork Performance Evaluation:

1. Adhere to ethics: Adhere consistently the American Occupational Therapy Association Code of Ethics and the site's policies and procedures including, when relevant, those related to human subject research
2. Adhere to safety regulations: Adhere consistently to safety regulations. Anticipate potentially hazardous situations and take steps to prevent accidents
3. Use judgment in safety: Use sound judgment in regard to safety of self and others during all fieldwork-related activities
4. Clearly and confidently articulate the values and beliefs of the occupational therapy profession to clients, families, significant others, colleagues, service providers, and the public

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5. Clearly, confidently, and accurately articulate the value of occupation as a method and desired outcome of occupational therapy to clients, families, significant others, colleagues, service providers, and the public

6. Clearly, confidently, and accurately communicate the roles of the occupational therapist and occupational therapy assistant to clients, families, significant others, colleagues, service providers, and the public

7. Collaborate with client, family, and significant others throughout the occupational therapy process

8. Articulate a clear and logical rationale for the evaluation process

9. Select relevant screening and assessment methods while considering such factors as client's priorities, context(s), theories, and evidence-based practice

10. Determine client's occupational profile and performance through appropriate assessment methods

11. Assess client factors and context(s) that support or hinder occupational performance

12. Obtain sufficient and necessary information from relevant resources such as client, families, significant others, service providers, and records prior to and during the evaluation process

13. Administer assessments in a uniform manner to ensure findings are valid and reliable

14. Adjust/modify the assessment procedures based on client's needs, behaviors, and culture

15. Interpret evaluation results to determine client's occupational performance strengths and challenges

16. Establish an accurate and appropriate plan based on the evaluation results, through integrating multiple factors such as client's priorities, context(s), theories, and evidence-based practice

17. Document the results of the evaluation process that demonstrates objective measurement of client's occupational performance

18. Articulate a clear and logical rationale for the intervention process

19. Utilize evidence from published research and relevant resources to make informed intervention decisions

20. Choose occupations that motivate and challenge clients

21. Select relevant occupations to facilitate clients meeting established goals

22. Implement intervention plans that are client-centered

23. Implement intervention plans that are occupation-based

24. Modify task approach, occupations, and the environment to maximize client performance

25. Update, modify, or terminate the intervention plan based upon careful monitoring of the client's status

26. Document client's response to services in a manner that demonstrates the efficacy of interventions

27. Demonstrate client's responses to services in a manner that demonstrates the efficacy of interventions

28. Demonstrate through practice or discussion the ability to actively collaborate with the occupational therapy assistant

29. Demonstrate understanding of the costs and funding related to occupational therapy services at this site

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30. Accomplish organizational goals by establishing priorities, developing strategies, and meeting deadlines
31. Produce the volume of work required in the expected time frame
32. Clearly and effectively communicate verbally and nonverbally with clients, families, significant others, colleagues, service providers, and the public
33. Produce clear and accurate documentation according to site requirement
34. Render all written communications legible, using proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar
35. Use language appropriate to the recipient of the information, including but not limited to funding agencies and regulatory agencies
36. Collaborate with supervisor(s) to maximize the learning experience
37. Take responsibility for attaining professional competence by seeking out learning opportunities and interactions with supervisor(s) and others
38. Respond constructively to feedback
39. Demonstrate consistent work behaviors including initiative, preparedness, dependability, and work site maintenance
40. Demonstrate effective time management
41. Demonstrate positive interpersonal skills including but not limited to cooperation, flexibility, tact, and empathy
42. Demonstrate respect for diversity factors of other including but not limited to socio-cultural, socioeconomic, spiritual, and lifestyle choices

**UTMB Occupational Therapy Etiquette**

1. Call in or e-mail if running late, in advance if possible. Report legitimate reasons for tardiness to the instructor after the fact if advance notice was not possible.
2. Acknowledge as soon as possible any individual e-mail sent by faculty, if only to indicate receipt and the intent to respond as soon as feasible.
3. Consider your advisor as the primary individual to approach with questions or needs. When ill or facing unexpected life challenges that compromise academic performance, keep your advisor in the loop. Keep your advisor informed of any grade of C or lower, even if by email, to indicate your plans to identify and/or address the problem.
4. When needing to meet with an instructor, consult faculty calendars (near office doors) to identify office and/or free hours and send an e-mail suggesting a few possible meeting times for the faculty member to consider. Approaching faculty on class breaks when they do not have calendars in hand may not be the most effective strategy.
5. Take responsibility for being a good steward in SHP classrooms and OT rooms. Notice needs and report them to the proper individuals.
6. Honor sign-out and other guidelines for resources taken/borrowed from the Bing library or OT office.
7. Take reading assignments seriously. The expectation is that assignments will be read and that students will spend two hours in outside study for each hour spent in class. Be responsible to print out needed

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course materials from the Blackboard and bring them to class. For example, open laptops are frequently not appropriate in active labs.

8. Understand that all course assignments are to be completed individually by students unless instructions specify the expectation to work with others.

9. Consider class sessions as professional events in which professional courtesies such as listening to the speaker, engaging in mature discussions with others, and responding to questions asked are the expectation.

10. Treat Chair’s Hour as a vital meeting that student professionals are expected to attend in order to access important information and contribute to important discussions. The perspective that students should assume during such meetings should be one of collaborative problem solving.

11. If the door to a faculty member’s office is either open or partially open, please feel free to knock on the door. If the door is closed with a sign hanging on the outside with the request not to be disturbed, please honor this and return later. The best way to speak with a member of the faculty is to send an email and ask for an appointment.

12. The staff usually takes lunch from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. If the office door is closed, please come back at a later time.

13. No food or beverages are permitted in the quad rooms on the first floor. Food can be eaten in the OT rooms during breaks. Munching during class is distracting and inappropriate. It is understood that students will monitor themselves by ensuring that the tables are clean and they will refrain from leaving food or litter in the room afterwards. The OT rooms are to be clean and ready for instructional use after lunch by 12:50 pm each day.

14. Please plan to bring your own bottled water if you choose not to drink water from the water fountains. The water dispenser in the main office is not available for general use.

15. Final course grades will be posted on MyStar before the required deadline. Please do not contact faculty for individual grades.

16. Students will have the opportunity to download lecture and lab materials onto laptops for their use during lectures and labs. Using a laptop for reasons other than educational purposes is disruptive to other learners in the classroom. Students who abuse this privilege will no longer be permitted to use a laptop during class time. To support a positive learning environment for all students, cellular telephones should be set to the “off” position during class time. If students anticipate a call about a critical family or personal matter, they may speak with the course instructor prior to the beginning of class and set cellular telephones on “vibrate.”

Maintaining the Occupational Therapy Rooms

Because of the large number of people who use the OT Rooms please observe the following rules so that the rooms remain orderly and ready for use by the next group:

1. Remove any items from the counters. The counters should be clear when you leave the room. *

2. Refrain from placing items on top of the cabinets. *

3. Space the chairs and push into the table when you leave.

4. The tables, floors, and counters are regularly cleaned by housekeeping. However, please clean up spills and debris immediately using available cleaning supplies.

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5. Remove all papers, including handouts, from tables and the front counter and cabinets. If you miss class, or if there are extra handouts, your instructor will take them to his or her office where you can get a copy as arranged.

6. Eating is permitted in the rooms at breaks if all utensils and other materials are removed and the area is maintained. Trash should be placed in the can at the front of the rooms near the door.

7. Student microwaves and fridges may be kept in the ADL suite. However, it is student responsibility to ensure these are kept clean and the suite is ready for class use at all times. Dishes may not be left in the sink or draining board.

8. SOTA and PTE have designated storage places. If you are a member of either of these groups, please store all items in the designated cabinet. If the materials you use won’t fit into these cabinets you will need to take them home and bring them back as needed.

Thank you for ensuring that we all have a pleasant learning environment.

* Note: If you created large charts or if you created materials that need to dry, such as splints, please remove from the walls after the activity is complete or when they are no longer needed.

**Hurricane Preparedness**

- Keep gas tank at least 1/2 full at all times
- Map of area
- Professional car check to make sure it’s in optimal running condition in case of evacuation
- Get a small flashlight that will fit in your glove box
- 2 forms of identification (residential lease and utility bill) to return to island and prove residency
- School ID
- School books and supplies
- Personal medical documents and medications
- Phone and computer chargers with back-up batteries
- Important phone numbers
- Car phone charger
- Contact lens supplies
- Extra Cash (banks and ATM's will be closed if electricity is lost)
- Waterless hand cleaner
- Unplug all electrical appliances everything if you evacuate
- Empty your fridge and freezer before evacuation

**Hurricane Kit**

- Water
- Flashlights
- Batteries
- Canned food that does not need can opener/power bars/meal replacement bars
• Antiseptic wipes
• Plastic plates, utensils
• Garbage bags
• Ziploc bags
• First-aid kit
• Betadine
• Rubbing Alcohol
• Hydrogen Peroxide
• Kleenex
• Paper towels
• 1 or 2 rolls of toilet paper
• N95 Grade Face Mask
• Insect Repellent
• Towels (a hand towel and bath towel or whatever you can fit)
• Swiss Army knife
• Cold medicines
• Battery operated AM-FM radio
• Battery operated fan
• Matches
• Candles
• Feminine Products
• For a pet:
  o Dog and/or cat food
  o Extra prescription medicines
  o Water for pet
  o Towels to dry pet off
  o Pet carrier and leashes
  o Certifications and licenses