



POLK STATE COLLEGE OTA PROGRAM

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Polk State College has established the following academic standards and requirements for successful completion of the curriculum:

General Academic Guidelines:

1. The grading scale for all courses in the academic and fieldwork components of the program is as follows:
 - 93 - 100 = A
 - 84 - 92 = B
 - 75 - 83 = C
 - 66 - 74 = D
 - below 66 = F
2. A student must earn a minimum grade of "C" or better in every OTA and general education course attempted.
3. A student who fails any general education course must repeat the failed course/s and pass with a "C" or better before attempting Level II fieldwork. Students will not be allowed to enter Level II fieldwork until all courses previously failed are completed successfully.
4. If a student fails an OTA course, he/she will not be allowed to continue any other OTA core course until the failed course is repeated successfully with a "C" or better. The student may repeat the failed course during the next term offered. Failure to pass the repeated course will result in dismissal from the program.
5. A student may not fail more than one OTA course within the program since the academic/fieldwork skills build upon concepts/skills learned in previous courses. Students who fail a second OTA course at any given point within the program sequence will be dismissed.
6. A student re-enrolling within a year after withdrawal from the program may be required to audit specific sessions of OTA courses and be tested for specific skills, depending on the student's previous academic status and level of competency.
7. If there has been a lapse greater than a year from the date of withdrawal, the student will have to reapply to the program as a brand new applicant, during the application window in

September.

8. A student is allowed to re-enroll in the program only once.
9. The Program sequence must be completed within 3 years.
10. The student is responsible for her/his own work. It is assumed that each student is honest and will abide by that standard; however, in there is an indication or suspicion that there has been a case of cheating/plagiarism, the situation will be handled in accordance with published College policies and program guidelines.

Cheating is defined as the giving or taking of any information or material with the intent of wrongfully aiding oneself or another in academic work considered in the determination of a course grade.

Plagiarism is defined (Black's Law Dictionary, Revised Fourth Edition) as "the act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts or passages of his writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the product of one's own mind." Plagiarism shall include failure to use quotation marks or other conventional markings around material quoted from any printed source, and paraphrasing a specific passage from a specific source without indicating accurately what that source is. Plagiarism shall further include letting another person compose or rewrite a student's assignment. The following items have been identified as a partial list of examples of cheating and/or plagiarism by the faculty and students at Polk State College:

- a. Asking for information from another student during a test situation.
- b. Copying answers from another's paper during a test situation.
- c. Knowingly letting someone copy from one's paper during a test situation.
- d. Using sources other than what is permitted by the instructor in a test situation.
- e. Copying material exactly or essentially from outside sources while omitting appropriate documentation.
- f. Copying or falsifying a report of a laboratory, fieldwork project, or assignment without doing the required work.
- g. Changing answers on a returned graded test in order to get the grade revised.

Reference: Polk State College District Board of Trustees; Board Rule 4.01
Student Conduct, Discipline, Due Process - Part I & II

Cases of cheating and/or plagiarism will be examined individually by the faculty and penalties will be determined according to the severity of the infraction. Penalties may include:

- a) Receiving a zero on the specific assignment/project. Student will be placed in "probationary status" and a behavioral contract will be issued, with specific expectations and consequences.
- b) Dismissal from the course; an "F" will be issued. Student will be placed in

- “probationary status” and a behavioral contract will be issued, with specific expectations and consequences. The student will have to repeat the course.
- c) Dismissal from the program.

Competency in Lab Courses:

11. Students are to wear pertinent lab garments as instructed and as per program dress code guidelines. Students who do not comply with the lab dress code will be asked by the instructor to leave the lab room and will not be allowed to participate in the session until appropriate garments are procured.
12. Students must show competency of at least 75% passing score on each practical lab exam.
13. Students are allowed to retake a failed practical lab exam 2 more times.
- a. **First Re-Take** - If the student passes the first re-take, the score for the exam will always be 75%, regardless of any higher score obtained by the student. The score from the original failed exam will be eliminated and the score from this first re-take exam will be added towards the cumulative lab grade.

If the student fails the first re-take, he/she will have to complete additional remedial training as assigned by the instructor in order to improve performance. Once the remedial training is completed, the student may re-take the exam for the second and last attempt.

- b. **Second Re-Take** - If the student passes the second re-take, the score for the exam will always be 75%, regardless of any higher score obtained by the student. The score from the first re-take exam will be eliminated and the score from this second re-take exam will be added towards the cumulative lab grade.

Failure to pass the second re-take will result in failing the course with an “F”, and the student having the option to repeat the course on the following year.

14. Students who fail the second re-take of a lab exam will receive an “F” on the pertinent course, but may be allowed to continue the program sequence if the failed course is not a prerequisite of courses scheduled for the following term. For instance, students failing OTH 2420C during the fall term may be allowed to continue enrollment in OTH 1014C during the same fall term and to enroll in OTH 1019C for the following spring term. OTH 2420C is not a co-requisite for OTH 1014C or a prerequisite for OTH 1019C.
15. Students under the criterion described in item #13 will be expected to continue participation in class activities and events as appropriate, and as designated by the instructor. Performance in any of these activities and events will be documented in the professional behaviors form or on the designated evaluation form.

16. Students are not to re-take more than 2 practical lab exams within a particular course. Failing the first attempt of a third practical lab exam will automatically result in failing the course, and the student having the option of repeating the course next year.
17. Most laboratory courses within the program contain competency skill testing, which requires a passing grade for each skill tested.

Disciplinary Actions:

18. A student's enrollment in the program may be terminated at any time if the student is judged to be unsuitable for an OTA career. This judgment will be based on specific circumstances related to the student's ability to adhere to PSC/OTA program rules/regulations, standards of conduct, codes of ethics, and professional behaviors.

This is a professional program and students are expected to conduct themselves ethically and professionally during all classes, laboratories, field trips, fieldworks, and professional meetings scheduled during, or off the official academic terms/semesters (in between terms/semesters). Students demonstrating inappropriate behavior, as outlined and defined in the Board Rule, during any of these times, will be given a penalty, as indicated in section IV of the Board Rule (Please see the Board Rule and Student Conduct, Discipline, and Due Process documents included in this manual for the list of offenses/unacceptable conduct that will be subject to penalty). If the incident occurs in between semesters or fieldwork rotations, the penalty will be reflected in the subsequent semester. Additionally, the OTA program has also developed a program-specific "Disciplinary Actions Process," which is included in the Student Handbook. Please note that the most serious penalty for unacceptable behavior is expulsion from the College.

Professional standards of conduct also include presenting a professional appearance and behaving in a professional manner as outlined later in this manual. Professional behavior and appearance are expected when the student is representing the College or the program in any activity, or in any situation in which the student is identifiable as a PSC OTA student, whether on campus or in the community. Any action considered detrimental to the image and reputation of the occupational therapy profession, the college, or the program is considered unprofessional conduct and will not be tolerated. This includes utilizing the facility's resources during official times for personal use, inappropriate or offensive postings on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, chat rooms, and any other electronic media. If it is determined upon examination of the incident that the behaviors were in violation of the OT Code of Ethics, the student may be terminated from the program.

All Polk State College OTA students will be subject to disciplinary action if it is determined that they have in any way participated in the distribution or disclosure of any pictures, videos or other information that is deemed to display or disclose material that is immoral, indecent, illegal, unethical or otherwise inappropriate and that relates to or was obtained in conjunction to said student's course of study in the College's OTA program. All students are

expected to respect the rights, privacy, and dignity of all those with whom they interact as a student of this College, and are expected to conduct themselves appropriately.

Because of the service nature of this profession, the American Occupational Therapy Association has issued the Code of Ethics for the Occupational Therapy Assistant. A copy of this is located in this handbook. Students enrolled in the OTA Program are expected to practice these standards during all classroom, laboratory, scheduled field trips, and fieldwork activities, as indicated.

19. Students are expected to exhibit and maintain professional behaviors such as complying with policies and procedures, carrying out assigned duties, communicating/interacting with peers and faculty in a respectful and professional manner, maintaining the work areas, etc. Students' professional behaviors will be monitored and evaluated mirroring the procedures used for an employed COTA in a fieldwork setting (verbal warning, written warning...). Non-compliance with professional behaviors will be addressed as follows:

a) First incidence:

- Student will meet with the faculty and/or program director to discuss behaviors and will receive a **verbal warning**.
- The meeting will be documented on the "Academic/Fieldwork Intervention" form by the faculty and/or program director and filed in the student's file.
- Faculty will be made aware of student's behavior and requested to monitor student's performance closely during the course of the semester.
- Faculty is to report student's unsuitable behavior as soon as possible to the program director.
- The disciplinary status of the student will remain active throughout the program.

b) Second Incidence:

- Student will meet with the faculty and/or program director and receive a **written warning** (whether it is related to the first incidence or not, and regardless of the time span between incidences) if he/she continues to exhibit any unsuitable behavior.
- The meeting will be documented on the "Academic/Fieldwork Intervention" form and filed in the student's file.
- The student will receive a copy of the written warning.
- All faculty members will be made aware of student's behavior and requested to monitor closely the student's performance during the course of the semester.
- Faculty is to report student's unsuitable behavior as soon as possible to the program director.
- The disciplinary status of the student will remain active throughout the program.

c) Third Incidence:

- Student will meet with the faculty and the program director (and the Dean of

Academic Affairs as needed) to discuss recurrent behavior. The meeting will be documented on the “Academic/Fieldwork Intervention” form and filed in the student’s file.

- Student will be placed on **probation** for the remainder of the program by the program director. The student’s performance will be monitored closely for the remainder of the program sequence and will be made aware that any recurrence of maladaptive behaviors during the probation period will automatically result in dismissal from the program.
- The student, the faculty, and the program director will collaboratively develop a **behavioral contract**, focusing on areas of behavior that need to be improved upon. Specific behavioral objectives and goals with specific timeframes will be included in the behavioral contract, as well as specific consequences if the goals are not attained.
- The program director will use the “Academic/Fieldwork Intervention” form to document behavioral strategies and file it in the student’s file.
- The disciplinary status of the student will remain active throughout the program.

d) Dismissal from program:

- A meeting with the faculty, program director (and the Dean of Academic Affairs as needed) will take place if the student is not successful meeting the behavioral goals. Specific rationale for dismissal will be discussed and documented on the “Academic/Fieldwork Intervention” form and filed in the student’s file.
- Student will be responsible for officially terminating courses at the Registrar’s office within a week from the dismissal date.
- Student is responsible for returning within a week from dismissal date, any equipment and/or materials borrowed from the program.
- The program director will contact the Registrar’s office after a week from the student’s dismissal date to corroborate withdrawal from the program.
- Automatic dismissal will result for those students whom after being removed from probation, continue to exhibit unprofessional/unethical behaviors. The procedures listed in this section will apply for this situation.

20. Unbecoming behaviors listed in paragraphs A-D in the “Student Code of Conduct” will result in suspension and/or expulsion from the OTA program.

21. A student who feels there are extenuating circumstances that warrant an exception to the stated academic standards may request the OTA Program Director to arrange for a meeting with the Review Committee to appeal the decision. The Dean of Academic Affairs, the OTA Program Director, and a PSC Instructor are members of the Committee.

- a) If re-enrollment is recommended by this Committee, admittance to a specific class will be arranged as per PSC procedure.
- b) If enrollment is not recommended, the student has the right to appeal through the Dean of Academic Affairs.

- c) The program will adhere to the appeal procedures as outlined by the institution.

Fieldwork Competency:

22. There are 3 fieldwork affiliations, which require the student to travel off campus to hospitals, clinics, and various other facilities (students may potentially have to drive up to a 60-mile radius from the College and/or residence):
- a. One Level I Fieldwork (4-week rotation; psychosocial setting)
 - b. Two Level II Fieldwork (one 8-week physical dysfunction with emphasis on psychosocial; one 8-week physical dysfunction).
23. A Level I Fieldwork experience may not be substituted for any part of a Level II Fieldwork rotation.
24. The ***Fieldwork Manual*** contains specific guidelines and regulations governing students' performance and conduct during fieldwork rotations. Each student will be provided with a Fieldwork Manual prior to initiating fieldwork work, and will meet with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, who will discuss the content of the manual during the orientation meeting scheduled in the spring term.
25. Grading criteria for Level I Fieldwork is based on the successful completion of the fieldwork objectives, the performance evaluation, and a special project.
26. Grading for Level II Fieldwork will be based on the AOTA performance evaluation and a special project.
27. The final grade for a Level I and II Fieldwork courses will be weighted as follows:
- **Performance Evaluation = 75%**
A minimum of 75% of the raw score obtained in this evaluation is required in order to pass this component. If less than 75% is obtained, the student will fail the course with an "F", regardless of the scores obtained in the special project or the total sum of the converted percentages (points).

Note: All items in Area I. *Fundamentals of Practice* of the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation form must be scored at a #3 or above on the final evaluation in order to pass fieldwork.
 - **Special Project = 25%**
A minimum of 75% of the raw score obtained in this project is required in order to pass this component. If score is less than 75%, the student will have a second and last attempt. Failing this second attempt (less than 75%) will result in failing the course with an "F." If the student passes the re-take/s, the score for the special project will always be 75% of the raw score, regardless of any higher score obtained by the student on the second attempt. This score will be combined with the score

from the performance evaluation in order to calculate the final grade.

Total = 100%

This is the sum of the converted percentages (points) obtained from the AOTA Performance Evaluation and the Special Project. **A minimum of 75 points** is required to pass the course.

- ❖ If the student obtains less than 75% in any of the two components of the weighted grade, he/she will fail the course and an “F” will be issued.
- ❖ The final score/percentage/points will not be rounded up for any of the fieldwork courses.

28. Every student is expected to behave with utmost professionalism during fieldwork rotations. Any demonstration of behaviors deemed unprofessional or unethical, as defined by professional code of ethics and program guidelines, will not be tolerated and will result in immediate dismissal from the program. The behaviors include, but are not limited to the following samples:

1. Stealing facility’s property
2. Slandering of staff members
3. Compromising safety of others
4. Insubordination (refusing or neglecting to follow directions)
5. Using facilities equipment for personal use/gain
6. Leaving the site without authorization from the Fieldwork Educator (FE) and/or AFWC.

Fieldwork guidelines and expectations will be further discussed by the AFWC during the fieldwork orientation.

29. Students who fail a Level I or II Fieldwork for the first time will have the opportunity to repeat the failed fieldwork (contingent upon availability of fieldwork sites) during the next term offered if no other OTH course has been previously failed. Unsuccessful passing of the repeated course will result in dismissal from the program.

30. As per ACOTE standards, all students are required to complete Level II fieldwork within 18 months, following completion of academic courses. Students who failed to complete FW II within this timeframe will be required to repeat the entire program sequence, excluding general education courses.