



POLK STATE COLLEGE

**OTA PROGRAM**

**ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

Admission into the Health Sciences Programs at Polk State College is based on academic achievement and additional program specific non-academic criteria that can be referenced in the catalog. Essential requirements have been established by each program identifying the occupational specific technical standards required of students in the program. Decisions to enroll in the Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program should be made after considering the program's Essential Requirements.

It is the responsibility of this program to be concerned with the rights of patients and clinical sites and to only place students in clinical education that are capable of providing safe, high quality health care. The following list represents reasonable expectations for the student enrolled in the OTA Program.

It is the responsibility of the program applicants to carefully review the essential requirements and ask questions if not familiar with the standards and skills listed. Certain chronic or recurrent illnesses and problems that interfere with patient care or safety may be incompatible with occupational therapy training or clinical practice. Conditions that may lead to a high likelihood of student absenteeism should be carefully considered. Deficiencies in knowledge, judgment, integrity, character, or professional attitude or demeanor which may jeopardize patient care may be grounds for course/rotation failure and possible dismissal from the program. All applicants to the program must have the ability to meet the standards and skills listed below in order to complete the educational requirements for the Associate in Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant.

If a student cannot demonstrate the following standards and skills without accommodation, it is the responsibility of the student to request an appropriate accommodation with the Coordinator for Special Services (in the Student Services Department) before the beginning of the school term. The College is committed to the principle of equal opportunity as defined in the catalog and will provide reasonable accommodation if it does not fundamentally alter the nature of the program offered and does not compromise patient safety or impose an undue hardship such as those that cause a significant expense or are unduly disruptive to the educational process.

**MOBILITY/MOTOR SKILLS**

KNEEL OR STOOP FREELY	To floor to adjust patient position or assist with equipment; inspect feet, apply shoes or prosthetics
KNEEL, HALF-KNEEL, CRAWL	On an exercise table to assist with patient activities.
REACH ABOVE HEAD	In standing, to adjust and position equipment
LIFT; PULL; GUIDE; TRANSFER	A patient of up to 150 lbs.
LIFT; PULL GUIDE; TRANSFER	A patient of up to 250 lbs. using a two-man technique
BEND, STAND, KNEEL, SIT, WALK OR CRAWL FOR 90 MINUTES WITHOUT REST	To administer emergency care (CPR); to perform lab activities and administer patient interventions
GUIDE; RESIST AND ASSIST	Adult patients (or classmates) during occupational therapy transfers, ambulation, interventions and exercises; using your arms legs or trunk to provide the necessary stabilization for a patient during therapy.
PUSH/PULL	Large, wheeled equipment; whirlpools, tilt tables and patients on stretchers or in wheelchairs
WALK	For extended periods of time to all areas of a hospital
CLIMB	Stairs & inclines while safely guarding an unstable patient
BILATERAL DEXTERITY	To adjust and fine tune controls on electrical and heat modalities; demonstrate ADL activities and exercises to patients; To carry out stretching, massage and exercise programs; adjust and use occupational therapy devices like goniometers and crutch/cane/walkers, carry out splinting techniques, guard patients
COORDINATION	To perform different tasks with different limbs simultaneously
SPEED AND AGILITY	To protect a walking or moving unstable patient from falling
ASSUME A WIDE BASE OF SUPPORT, BALANCE	To guard, maintain and correct balance of an unstable patient on flat surfaces, inclines and stairs
PERFORM	All patient physical assistance using safe and proper body mechanics
WORK CAPACITY	To perform all essential skills and standards to complete eight-hour days, and a 40-hour study week during OTA Program enrollment

### **SENSORY ABILITIES AND OBSERVATIONAL SKILLS**

DEPTH PERCEPTION	For judging distance, surface changes, level changes while ambulating patients
SEE (with or without corrective lenses)	Patient skin, discriminate color changes, facial expressions and non-verbal communications, normal and abnormal patterns of movement; the environment for up to 20 feet; to read and set parameters on

	occupational therapy equipment, detect small calibrations on measuring instruments
FEEL	To discriminate small and large temperature differences; palpate pulses; assess body segment contour; to assess muscle tone; joint movement, discriminate sharp and dull, light touch and deep pressure sensation
HEAR	Soft voices, masked voices, patient call systems, alarms, timers, blood pressure sounds using a stethoscope; demonstrate active listening skills
SMELL	To detect odors related to patient assessment
POSITION, MOVEMENT AND BALANCE SENSATION	To feel where your individual body segments are located and to know when and how they are moving even when you cannot see them

## COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

SPEAK AND EXPRESS	Clearly and understandably in the English language; information to peers, faculty, patients, their families and other health care providers; to explain conditions and procedures and teach home programs. Students are expected to communicate electronically as well as verbally in a professional manner.
READ	Typed, handwritten, chart data, and computer-generated documents in the English language; at a level of competency that allows safe and timely execution of essential tasks or assignments.
UNDERSTAND; INTERPRET	Medical terminology and information given regarding status, progress, and safety of a patient; to follow simple and complex instructions (oral or written) given by an OT regarding patient care; and respond to non-verbal communication/behaviors of self and others.
FOLLOW DIRECTIONS	Accurately and efficiently, seeking clarification where necessary
WRITE	To produce legible handwritten or computer word processed documents; use correct medical terminology, spelling, grammar and punctuation; organize and express thoughts in written form in the English language; to prepare accurate, thorough, legally defensible patient documentation. An essential requirement of all students is that he/she demonstrates the ability to consistently access and utilize technology for access to learning management software and basic Microsoft Office (Powerpoint, Word, Excel) in order to be successful in face to face as well as distance learning components of the program.
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	To work collaboratively; interact professionally; to establish rapport with patients, colleagues and classmates; to resolve conflicts; with individuals from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds; maintain confidentiality in all interactions

## COGNITIVE AND INTELLECTUAL STANDARDS

THINK CRITICALLY	To identify and solve problems; identify cause/effect relationships; to apply reading, lecture and laboratory information to case study preparation; to employ effective teaching, learning and test taking strategies
COMPREHEND	relevant information regarding patient diagnoses, occupational therapy interventions, indications and contraindications, human pathology and impairments from textbooks, medical records and professional literature
PRIORITIZE	Events to provide for patient safety; appropriate patient interventions; multiple tasks; integrate information and make decisions about sequence and progression
CALCULATE	To collect and/or interpret accurate patient data
MAKE CLINICAL DECISIONS	To respond quickly and appropriately to changes in patient status; to analyze written, observed or verbal data about patients and make decisions

	to terminate, modify, progress or cancel patient treatment; act safely and ethically in the occupational therapy lab and clinic.
SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM MEMORY	To accurately and quickly remember data from the chart and information relayed in verbal exchanges with the OT and other members of the health care team; to access learned knowledge to include but not limited to diagnoses, weight-bearing status, indications, contraindications for interventions, safety precautions, subjective reports of patients, emergency procedures; safety procedures; to participate successfully in the learning and evaluation of knowledge within the occupational therapy curriculum
THINK QUICKLY AND CLEARLY	To execute all duties unimpaired by any condition or substance that alters mental processing, speed or quality of thought processes or judgment

### **BEHAVIORAL/PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

FLEXIBILITY	To adjust to a constantly changing and very demanding full-time schedule;
COMPASSION	To respect and show empathy for patients and their families; for people of all personality types, backgrounds, ethnic, race or socioeconomic backgrounds including but not limited to individuals with neurological disorders, physical disfigurement, mental health or complex medical problems.
COOPERATION	To work as a member of a team; develop positive and effective relationships with faculty, clinicians, peers and patients
RECOGNIZE LIMITATIONS	To request assistance when needed; accept correction and constructive suggestions; assume responsibility for personal development; utilize resources effectively
TOLERANCE	For close physical contact with patients, peers and classmates during the provision of interventions and in lab; for close proximity and physical contact with patients that require use of standard precautions during therapy due to open wounds, incontinence or other potential exposure to bodily fluids or pathogens during treatment.
WILLINGNESS	To wear scrub top/pants as the assigned uniform for clinical rotations; To wear required lab attire that will allow for visualization of body contours and exposure of all major joints and muscles; to participate in lab activities that require palpation, measurement, massage and other forms of therapeutic touching of joints, muscles and bony landmarks; to serve as both the patient model and clinician during patient simulations that allow classmates to practice and perfect occupational therapy skills.
POSITIVE ATTITUDE	To demonstrate initiative, enthusiasm and appropriate peer and patient interactions
WORK ETHIC	To attend class and clinic promptly and regularly; to stay focused and on task in lecture and laboratory instructional time; to submit work products promptly when due; to display industrious behavior; to submit to all

	classroom and clinical rules/policies; to demonstrate respect for other health care providers and the profession of occupational therapy; to comply with all legal and ethical standards of practice
STRESS MANAGEMENT	Coping skills for fast-paced clinical situations; to manage multiple academic deadlines; deal effectively with psychosocial issues of catastrophic illness, disability and death; respond appropriately in a stressful environment and during impending deadlines; manage personal matters outside of class/workday
PLANNING AHEAD	To arrange transportation and living accommodations for/during off campus clinical assignments to foster timely reporting to the classroom and clinical center
SELF CARE	To maintain general good health and hygiene in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with whom one interacts in the academic and clinical settings