

University of Kansas Medical Center  
Occupational Therapy Education Department  
*Supporting People to Participate in Everyday Life*

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT POLICY  
TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS FOR  
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS**

Because a Master's in Occupational Therapy Degree signifies that the holder is eligible to sit for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy exam and signifies that the holder is prepared for entry into the profession of occupational therapy, it follows that graduates must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical, community or school based situations and to render a wide spectrum of occupational therapy services. Therefore, all students admitted to the program must meet the following expectations:

1. Essential Motor Skills: The occupational therapy student must:
  - have gross motor skills to move freely and safely about the medical center and fieldwork sites.
  - perform moderately taxing physical work, often requiring prolonged sitting.
  - have balance and equilibrium necessary to do such things as move clients from bed to wheelchair or to manipulate parts of, or whole bodies of, simulated and real people of all ages.
  - have fine motor skills essential to perform such tasks as anatomical dissection, splint making, or maneuvering equipment.
  
2. Essential Sensory Skills: The occupational therapy student must:
  - accurately perceive objects in the environment
  - accurately observe human performance. For example, the student must be able to discriminate between a safe and an unsafe environment and between therapeutic and non-therapeutic behavior and contexts.
  
3. Essential Communication skills: The occupational therapy student must:
  - assimilate information from written sources (texts, journals, medical or school records, etc).
  - attain, comprehend, retain and utilize new information presented in written formats.
  - independently complete assignments, tests, and professional documentation appropriately and in a timely manner and in appropriate format.
  - impart information so that it can be understood by others.
  - elicit information from instructors, peers, persons receiving services, family members, and supervisors.
  - follow verbal or written instruction in order to complete assignments.
  - note and respond to factual information provided by others as well as to the more subtle cues of mood, temperament and social responses.
  - communicate with others accurately, sensitively, effectively and succinctly.
  - communicate in a timely and situationally appropriate manner.
  
4. Essential Cognitive Skills: the occupational therapy student must:
  - a) Clinical Reasoning:

- make correct observations and have the skills of comprehension, measurement, calculation, reasoning, integration, analysis and synthesis. For example, the student must have the skills to conduct assessments accurately, compute test scores, analyze results and determine the impact of this information on intervention, while synthesizing a variety of input.
- recognize, label and categorize information to draw conclusions. Then the student must be able to question, analyze and judge the results of their conclusion.

b) Judgment:

- demonstrate judgment in classroom; laboratory; and fieldwork settings which shows an ability to make mature, sensitive and effective decisions in appropriate situations
- relate appropriately to instructors, peers, supervisors and persons being served. For example, when provided with constructive feedback from an instructor or supervisor, the student will adapt behavior accordingly.
- demonstrate professional behaviors, such as timeliness and regular attendance.

5. Essential Behavioral/Social Skills: occupational therapy students must:

- exhibit professional behaviors and attitudes during their participation in the classroom and in clinical situations. This includes, but is not limited to, appropriate language, flexibility toward change and acceptance of responsibility for one's own conduct.
- exhibit a positive attitude toward persons being served, family members, peers and supervisors.
- possess the emotional health necessary to effectively employ intellect and exercise appropriate judgment.
- be flexible and creative to adapt to professional and technical change.
- demonstrate professional attitudes and behaviors while experiencing heavy workloads (e.g., large number of tasks to complete in a limited amount of time), task related uncertainty (e.g. changes of schedule on short notice), and a distracting environment.
- support and promote the activities of peers and health care professionals by sharing knowledge, eliciting input, and acting with empathy toward others.
- be honest, compassionate, ethical, and responsible.
- be forthright about errors or uncertainty.
- critically evaluate his or her own performance, accept constructive criticism, and look for ways to improve.
- evaluate the performance of fellow students, instructors, and clients and tactfully offer constructive comments.

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply to the program. The University and faculty will work with individuals with disabilities to determine what reasonable accommodations will facilitate successful completion of the occupational therapy curriculum and preparation for the certification examination.

KUMC is an AA/EO/Title IX Institution.