



# SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND MEDICAL SCIENCES

*Occupational Therapy*

## SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

### **Standards for Essential Functions**

Seton Hall University-School of Health and Medical Sciences is committed to the education of all qualified individuals, including persons with disabilities who, with or without reasonable accommodation, are capable of performing the essential functions of the educational program in which they are enrolled and the profession that they pursue.

It is the policy of each of the graduate programs in the Seton Hall University-School of Health and Medical Sciences to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and state and local requirements regarding students and applicants with disabilities. Under these laws, no otherwise qualified and competent individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in services, programs, and activities solely on the basis of the disability.

### **Essential Functions/Technical Standards for Graduate Enrollment**

In accord with federal regulations established by the Americans With Disabilities Act, the following standards are described to assist each candidate in evaluating his/her prospect for academic and clinical success. General standards for the School of Health and Medical Sciences are followed by standards that apply to the professional discipline to which you have applied (see additional standards below). When a student's ability to perform is compromised, the student must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to perform the essential functions described.

It is important that each student reads each standard carefully. By signing of this manual, the student is indicating that s/he has read and understood these standards.

#### **Observation Skills:**

Students must be able to acquire a defined level of required information as presented through educational experiences in both basic arts and sciences and clinical sciences. To achieve the required competencies in the classroom setting, students must perceive, assimilate, and integrate information from a variety of sources. These sources include oral presentation, printed material, visual media, and live demonstrations. Consequently, students must demonstrate adequate functional use of visual, tactile, auditory and other sensory and perceptual modalities to enable such observations and information acquisition necessary for academic and clinical performance.

## **Communication Skills:**

Effective communication is critical for students to build relationships with faculty, advisors, fellow graduate students, coworkers, clients, and their significant others in the student's various roles of learner, colleague, consultant, and leader. Students must be able to gather, comprehend, utilize and disseminate information effectively, efficiently and according to professional standards. Students are required to communicate in the English language both verbally and in writing, at a level consistent with competent professional practice. Students are expected to use grammar and vocabulary proficiently. They must be able to elicit information, gather information, and describe findings verbally and in writing (e.g., in a physical examination record and treatment plan). This communication should be comprehensible by patients, professionals, and lay-persons.

Students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds; this includes, but is not limited to, the ability to establish rapport with patients and communicate effectively judgments and treatment information. They should also be able to observe, recognize and understand non-verbal behavior.

## **Intellectual/Conceptual Abilities:**

Students must demonstrate critical thinking skills so that they can problem-solve creatively, master abstract ideas, and synthesize information presented in academic, laboratory and fieldwork settings. Students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, process, integrate, synthesize, apply and retain facts, concepts, and data related to the art and science of health care. In some areas, this requires comprehension of three-dimensional relationships and understanding of the spatial relationships of structures. Students must develop and exhibit a sense of medical ethics, and also recognize and apply pertinent legal and ethical standards.

## **Motor:**

Students must possess the motor functions needed to manipulate tools or handle clients. These functions will vary depending on the particular program (See additional standards below). The motor capacities usually include the physical strength and coordination to safely handle and move clients, perform medical procedures, or direct clients in various practice settings according to the needs of their discipline.

## **Behavioral and Social Skills:**

Students must demonstrate emotional stability and acceptable communication skills, and be capable of developing mature and effective interpersonal relationships with other students and health care workers. Students must be able to tolerate physically and emotionally taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and function in the face of the uncertainties inherent in the clinical setting.

Students must exhibit the ability and commitment to work with individuals in an intense setting to meet the needs of people of diverse cultures, age groups, socioeconomic groups and challenges without bias. These individuals may be severely injured; they may be limited by cognitive, emotional and functional deficits; and their behavior may create at times an aversive reaction. The ability to interact with these individuals without being judgmental or prejudiced is critical in establishing one's professionalism and therapeutic relationship. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are critical to complete each program.

## **Professional Responsibility:**

Students must exhibit the ability to meet the challenges of any medical situation that requires a readiness for immediate and appropriate response without interference of personal or medical problems. This requires training for emergencies (e.g., CPR, infection control).

It is each student's responsibility to attend and be able to travel to and from classes and clinical assignments on time, and possess the organizational skills and stamina for performing required tasks and assignments within allotted time frames. This involves frequent oral, written, and practical examinations or demonstrations. The student must have the ability to perform problem-solving tasks in a timely manner.

Students will exhibit adherence to policies of the university, their program, and clinical sites. This includes matters ranging from professional dress and behavior, to attending to their program's academic schedule, which may differ from the University's academic calendar and be subject to change at any time.

Students must demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to the code of ethics of their profession and behavior that reflects a sense of right and wrong in the helping environment.

Students will take initiative to direct their own learning. They need to work cooperatively and collaboratively with other students on assigned projects, and participate willingly in a supervisory process involving evaluation of abilities and reasoning skills.

## **Essential Functions: Department of Occupational Therapy**

### **Observation/Perception:**

Students must be able to perceive, assimilate, and integrate information from a variety of sources including oral presentations, printed materials, visual media, and hands-on demonstrations. Students must demonstrate adequate functional use of visual, tactile, auditory, and other sensory and perceptual modalities to enable such observations and information acquisition. Students must be able to perceive and appropriately interpret nonverbal communications.

### **Communication:**

Students must demonstrate consistent and acceptable communication skills and be capable of developing mature and effective interpersonal professional relationships. Effective communication is critical for students to build relationships with faculty, advisor, fellow students, co-workers, clients and their clients' significant others in the student's various roles of learner, colleague, consultant and leader. Students must effectively and sensitively communicate with clients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds. Students are required to communicate in the English language both verbally and in writing, at a level consistent with competent professional practice. Students are expected to use grammar, vocabulary, and professional terminology proficiently.

## **Functional Activities:**

Students must possess the sensory and motor functions needed to participate effectively in procedures common to occupational therapy practice:

- J Students must be able to exhibit sufficient postural and neuromuscular control, sensory function and coordination to safely and accurately provide assessment and treatment for clients.
- J Students must be able to demonstrate accurate and safe use of accepted techniques
- J Students must be able to gather, comprehend, utilize, and disseminate information effectively, efficiently, and according to professional standards.
- J Students must be able to describe findings verbally and in writing (e.g., evaluation findings and treatment plan). The communication should be comprehensible by patients, professionals, and lay-persons.
- J Students need to be able to participate in physical activity involving lifting or moving of approximately 50 lbs., bending, moving and supporting others.
- J Students must possess functional use of visual, auditory and tactile senses to observe and interpret client signs and symptoms.
- J Students must possess sufficient motor, tactile, and sensory functions in order to attend and participate in activities which are part of the curriculum. This includes production of written and oral communication commensurate with the profession.
- J Students are expected to function in a wide variety of patient care settings in a reasonably independent and potentially high speed/high demand environment.
- J Students must also be able to safely and efficiently utilize equipment and materials necessary to assist patients.
- J Students must be able to use therapeutic self-strategies including active listening, reflective questioning, empathy, and a nonjudgmental attitude to establishing meaningful verbal and nonverbal communication with individuals including clients and fieldwork supervisors.

## **Professional and Ethical Behavior:**

- J Students must demonstrate a commitment to excellence, honesty, integrity, respect for others, compassion, social responsibility, and altruism.
- J Students must exhibit the ability to meet the challenges of any medical situation that requires a readiness for immediate and appropriate responses without interference of personal or medical problems. This requires training for medical emergencies (e.g., CPR, infection control).
- J It is each student's responsibility to attend and be able to travel to and from classes and fieldwork assignments on time and possess the organizational skills and stamina for performing required tasks and assignments within allotted time frames. This involves frequent oral, written, and practical examinations or demonstrations.
- J Students must adhere to policies of the university, the occupational therapy program, and clinical sites. This includes matters ranging from professional dress and behavior to attending to the program's academic schedule, which may differ from the university's academic calendar and be subject to change at any time.
- J Students must demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to the code of ethics of their profession as well as behaviors that reflect a sense of right and wrong in the helping and academic environments.
- J Students must develop and exhibit a sense of medical ethics and also recognize and apply pertinent legal and ethical standards including adherence to confidentiality requirements.

- J Students are expected to recognize and act on the need to take initiative to direct their own learning. They are required to work cooperatively, collaboratively, and respectfully with other students on assigned projects and participate willingly in supervisory processes involving evaluation of abilities and reasoning skills.
- J Students must exhibit the ability and commitment to work with individuals in potentially intense settings to meet the needs of diverse cultures, age groups, socioeconomic groups, and challenges without bias. These individuals may be severely injured, may be limited by cognitive, emotional, and functional deficits, and may have behavior that, at times, creates an aversive reaction. The ability to interact with these individuals without being judgmental or prejudiced is critical in establishing one's professionalism and therapeutic relationships.

**Cognition:**

- J Students must demonstrate critical thinking skills so that they can problem solve efficiently and creatively, master abstract ideas, and synthesize information presented in the classroom, laboratory, and fieldwork settings.
- J Students must be able to integrate and accurately utilize information acquired through educational experiences in both basic arts and sciences.
- J Students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, process, integrate, synthesize, retain, and apply facts, concepts, and data related to the art and science of health care. This may require comprehension of three-dimensional relationships and an understanding of the spatial relationships of structures.
- J Students must have the cognitive capacity to appropriately utilize technology in the classroom and in clinical or community settings.
- J Students must have the cognitive capacity to use sound judgment, ethical reasoning, and clinical reasoning are essential.

**Behavioral and Social:**

- J Students must demonstrate emotional stability and be capable of developing mature, respectful, and effective interpersonal relationships with other students, faculty, and healthcare workers.
- J Students must be able to tolerate physically and emotionally taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress.
- J Students must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and function professionally in the face of the uncertainties inherent in educational, clinical, and community settings.
- J Students must be able to engage in personal reflection and self-awareness as a mechanism of effective personal growth, development, and lifelong learning.

**Professionalism:**

Students must fully participate in lab activities that require hands on contact with classmates and instructors in various stages of moderate undress for clinical training.

Students must demonstrate appropriate behaviors and skills in the classroom and fieldwork interactions with faculty, other students, fieldwork coordinator, fieldwork supervisors and professional colleagues. This includes, but is not limited to, an ability to give and receive constructive feedback; adjust or modify responses according to the feedback received; and adhere to facility and program rules and regulations.

## References

Scott, S., Wells, S., and Hanebrink, S. (1999) *Educating College Students with Disabilities: What Academic & Fieldwork Educators Need to Know*. Bethesda, MD: AOTA, Inc.

University of North Dakota (2016). 2016 Student Manual, Occupational Therapy Department, Grand Forks.  
Retrieved on 5/11/2016: <http://www.med.und.edu/occupational-therapy/files/docs/student-manual-gf-2016.pdf>



Occupational Therapy Professional Program

*(Please return **only this page** with your application materials)*

**Essential Functions**

Students are required to meet standards identified as essential to the practice of occupational therapy. Please indicate your ability to meet these essentials.

Certification:

I certify that I have read and understand the Standards for Essential Functions for both the School of Health and Medical Sciences and the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy Program. I believe to the best of my knowledge that I meet each of these standards, with or without reasonable accommodation(s). Further, I understand that should I need accommodation(s) due to disability, it is my responsibility to meet with the Office of Disability Support Services to discuss and determine that.

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Student's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name