OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT

Students will become competent and caring entry-level occupational therapy assistant practitioners who demonstrate the clinical skills, interpersonal skills, knowledge and values necessary for success.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT

Degree: Associate in Applied Science
HEGIS Code: 5210
Curriculum Code: 0665
Campus Location: North
Health Sciences Division

Pre-Admission Recommendations: 80% HS Avg., 2.80 GPA within 5 years of prospective admission for College Students, Placement test waiver or completion of developmental English and Math courses. See admissions requirements on next page.

Recommended High School Courses and/or Experiences: HS Biology, HS Psychology, HS Anatomy & Physiology, HS Math-Algebra, Geometry, Statistics and Probability, HS Physics, HS English and Writing Courses, Volunteer experience in health care settings

Career Opportunities/Further Education: Hospitals, rehabilitation centers/outpatient clinics, home health, long term care, early intervention, school-based settings, academia, day treatment settings/developmental/physical disabilities, psychosocial rehab/mental health, community-based wellness and prevention programs

Program Description

There have been dramatic shifts in U.S. population as a result of an increased average life span. This phenomenon, along with advances in science, technology and medicine has brought occupational therapy into the forefront of the health care field. The U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projected employment of occupational therapists to increase by 24% and of occupational therapy assistants to increase by 28% between 2016 and 2026. United Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics also reports a 2017 mean annual income of $59,470 for occupational therapy assistants.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant curriculum prepares entry-level occupational therapy assistants to work in community and institutional health care programs, providing direct occupational therapy services to individuals.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant curriculum combines Occupational Therapy Assistant and general education courses with selected laboratory experiences. Program courses cover theory and application of theory, development across the lifespan (birth to death), therapeutic use of self, pediatric/adult/and geriatric patient/client treatment, physical disabilities/mental health, research, evidence-based practice, technology and documentation. The Occupational Therapy specific classes are complemented with general studies in anatomy, physiology, psychology, sociology, and English composition. Although the Occupational Therapy Assistant curriculum is designed to be completed in two academic years, students may take a longer time to fulfill their degree requirements, depending on individual circumstances.

In the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program, students receive instruction in theory and develop practical skills relating to occupational therapy through classroom, laboratory, community and clinical settings. Through second year course work, students participate in community and clinical practice settings to include general physical medicine and psychiatric centers, developmental disabilities, schools, nursing homes and community agencies. In these experiences, students gain experience in working with and teaching patients and clients methods for engagement in self-care, work, play/leisure, education, social skills and home/community living skills.

Technical Ability Standards do exist for the OTA Program and they are a reality of the profession. However, due to the diversity of occupational therapy practice areas, OTA Education lends itself toward attracting students of diverse abilities. The Erie Community College OTA Program is committed to the notion of dis-ABILITY as diversity. Provided a student has the capacity to successfully navigate the program, graduate, and pass their certification exam, it is our goal to
provide reasonable accommodations to facilitate every student’s success. Please read, "Special Admission Requirements/Pre-requisites: Technical Ability Standards,” as listed below for more information.

Accreditation
The program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). The address is 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200, Bethesda, Maryland 20814-3449. ACOTE’s telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 352-AOTA. Website for ACOTE: www.acoteonline.org. Website for AOTA: www.aota.org.

Graduates of the program will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapy assistant administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). In addition, most states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Note that a felony conviction may affect a graduate’s ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

Graduation/Certification/Licensure
• An Associate in Applied Science degree is granted to each student who successfully completes all coursework and all fieldwork. The student must also demonstrate proficiency in algebra at the level of MT 006.
• New York State certification is required for employment in New York State. Upon graduation from the program, an individual is eligible to apply for certification. Many states in the U.S. require state licensure. Separate applications for state licensure must be filed within that state.
• New York State DOES require passing of the National Certification Exam (NBCOT) for employment in New York State. A final, official transcript indicating confirmation for an Associate in Applied Science degree (A.A.S.) in Occupational Therapy Assistant must be submitted to NBCOT as part of the application process for the national exam.
• Results of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) Exam:

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<tr>
<th>Graduation Year</th>
<th>Number of Program Graduates</th>
<th>Graduation Rate</th>
<th>Number of New Graduate Test Takers</th>
<th>Number of New Graduate Test Takers who Passed the Exam</th>
<th>Percentage of New Graduate Test Takers who Passed the Exam</th>
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<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>17/24</td>
<td>70.83%</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>70.83%</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>58</td>
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Department Notes
Level II students, enrolled in the last semester in field work, are not permitted to officially withdraw if they fail in fieldwork. The failing grade will be submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the OTA Department.

• The student must maintain a minimum grade of a "C+" in all OT courses and a "C" in all general education courses required for the degree. A grade of “C” is not passing in OT courses and a grade of “C–” is not passing in general education courses required for degree completion. General education courses may only be re-taken once within a five year period.
• General Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, Anatomy and Physiology I and II, lecture and lab, must have been taken in the last five years. Introduction to Sociology and College Composition (English Writing) may have been taken in the last 10 years with a student earning either an A or a B. Students must acquire computer literacy skills prior to enrolling in OT 101, either through life skills or as a remedial course. Expiration of credit is a reality, as retention of knowledge is an issue. However, expiration of credit exceptions for English, general psychology, and sociology do exist in the event of continuing competency established by supplemental coursework in these fields of study.
• A curriculum required course may be repeated only once. If approval to repeat a course is given, enrollment in the course is dependent on space availability.
• The curriculum is designed in a sequence of courses to be completed in that manner. Refer to course description section for sequence of courses and prerequisites.

• Each student will receive, "The OTA Student Manual" upon admission into the Program. A signature acknowledging receipt and understanding of requirements and responsibilities is required by the first day of OTA classes.
• Students are required to attend OTA Orientation (first year students) and OTA Re-Orientation (second and any third year students). Orientation and Re-Orientation are housed in the OTA Department and take place during the summer months.
• Each student is responsible for providing transportation to off-campus community agencies utilized for clinical activities.
• A physical exam and current immunization report are required annually within the Program. Immunization against Hepatitis B is required. Flu vaccination and documentation as proof is required annually. Two part PPD testing and related documentation is required annually.
• Because of the nature of the profession, deviation from professional conduct may adversely affect patient/client well-being. Therefore, the department reserves the right to immediately remove a student from didactic, laboratory, or clinical course-work and/or dismiss that student from the program if the department has determined the student has displayed inappropriate behavior or acted in an unprofessional manner. Appropriate professional conduct and department policies relative to fieldwork are outlined in the OTA Student Manual.
• Additional fee requirements may include professional membership fees (AOTA and NYSOTA are required), OTKE Exam, NBCOT Exam Prep Course and others.
• Students are responsible to meet all requirements and/or costs associated with fieldwork experience requirements.
Program Competencies

Upon graduation with an Associate in Applied Science degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant, the graduate will be able to:

- Identify factors that suggest or hinder occupational performance by gathering relevant information utilizing available resources: EMR/HER, screenings and evaluations, clinical observations, team and family members.
- Establish service competency in assessment methods such as interviews, observation, assessment tools, and chart reviews within the context of the service delivery system.
- Develop client-centered and occupation-based goals in collaboration with the occupational therapist.
- Plan, select, and implement client-centered and occupation-based interventions effectively in collaboration with client, family/significant other, occupational therapist, and service provider.
- Grade and adapt activities and/or the environment to support engagement in occupations.
- Utilize effective and appropriate verbal, nonverbal, and written communication with client, families, colleagues, and the public.
- Produce clear and accurate written documentation according to site requirements to include assessments, progress reports, and discharge summaries, attendance records, statistical reports, and third party payment.
- Conduct oneself in a professional manner adhering to the American Occupational Therapy Association Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, client rights, and confidentiality.
- Maintain a therapeutic environment within a clinical setting to maintain order, prevent accidents, promote adherence to safety regulations of self and others.
- Develop appropriate professional behaviors related to self-responsibility, constructive feedback, work behaviors, time management, interpersonal skills, and cultural competence.
- Clearly communicate the values and beliefs of occupational therapy, the role of the occupational therapist, and the occupational therapy assistant to clients, families/significant others, and service providers.
- Make informed decisions based on published research and relevant informational sources.

CURRICULUM

Total Degree Credits: 62.0

First Year, Fall Semester
OT 101 Introduction to OT (2 cr)
OT 102 Occupational Performance (3 cr)
BI 150 Anatomy and Physiology I (3 cr)
BI 151 Laboratory for BI 150 (1 cr)
EN 110 College Composition (3 cr)
PS 100 General Psychology (3 cr)

First Year, Spring Semester
OT 120 Human Occupation Across the Life Span (3 cr)
OT 130 Occupational Therapy Interventions (4 cr)
OT 141 Level 1A Fieldwork-Research of Community Practice-Psychosocial Focus (1 cr)
OT 150 Therapeutic Use of Self (1 cr)
BI 152 Anatomy and Physiology II (3 cr)
BI 153 Laboratory for BI 152 (1 cr)
PS 202 Abnormal Psychology (3 cr)

Summer Session I
OT 160 Level 1B Fieldwork-Clinical Practice in Physical Disabilities (1 cr)
SO 100 Introduction to Sociology (3 cr)

Second Year, Fall Semester
OT 200 Psychosocial Practice (3 cr)
OT 209 Physical Disabilities Practices-Lab for OT 210 (2 cr)
OT 210 Physical Disabilities (2 cr)
OT 218 Disabilities of Development and Aging Lab (1 cr)
OT 219 Disabilities of Development & Aging (3 cr)
OT 222 Technology in Documentation and Research-Lab (1 cr)
OT 256 Biomechanics in OT (2 cr)

Second Year, Spring Semester
OT 239 Level II A Fieldwork (6 cr)
OT 140 Professional Issues (1 cr)
OT 251 Level II B Fieldwork (6 cr)

Note: The program is designed to be completed in two (2) years for full-time students. The curriculum above is a recommended two-year course sequence. Due to heavy curricular requirements, coursework can best be accommodated by completing the program in three (3) years. Students may wish to fulfill some or all general education required coursework prior to admission into the Program. Students should consult their academic adviser prior to registering. The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is largely a day-time program, with occasional evening courses, based on adjunct faculty availability.

For students attending part time, the program can be completed within no more than four (4) years.

*Computer Literacy is required prior to admission in the OTA Program. This can be through life experience or as a remedial course such as CS 101. Each OTA Program applicant is responsible for assessing his or her own computer literacy based on the following information:

- Students must demonstrate competency in computer use, including ability to use databases and search engines to access information, word processing for writing, and Power Point for presentations. Students will be expected to navigate websites (SUNY Erie, AOTA, NBCOT, NYSED). Students will be expected to efficiently use e-mail, attaching files as needed, and are expected to utilize their SUNY Erie e-mail account, checking it at least one time daily. Students are expected to navigate Blackboard for various OT courses. Students will post to and utilize YouTube, as well as Facebook (a closed group entitled, SUNY ERIE SOTA).

**Students must complete AED/CPR Certification for adults and children/infants prior to their Level 1B Fieldwork experience. Students can do this by taking the SUNY Erie classes HT 201 or EG 009. This requirement can also be met by attending a class at the American Red Cross. There must be a practical application (lab/hands on) portion of the course. Proof of certification must be provided to the Department after course completion. Upon admission into the Program, the Department will assess the need for a group one day class housed in the Department. AED/CPR Certification is good for two years. If a student needs to repeat any OT courses, re-certification may be required. Mental Health First Aid Training is also required of students and provided through the College at no cost to the student and this course takes place after Program admission.

**Each Level II fieldwork is eight weeks in length and supervision by an OTR, COTA, or both is provided. Fieldwork must be completed within 20 months of the didactic coursework for the OTA program.