



## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY EDUCATION STUDENT HANDBOOK

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**Grievances**

## ***Welcome!***

The Occupational Therapy Education Department's faculty and staff welcome you to the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC) as the Class of 2025!

You soon will have a taste of the KU Medical Center's campus and realize it is much different than an undergraduate college campus. The purpose of this handbook is to help ease your transition from an undergraduate student to being a graduate student in a "professional" program, introduce you to University, School, and Departmental policies and resources, and encourage a spirit of discovery related to studying and training on our campus before going on to become successful and contributing professionals in the field of Occupational Therapy.

## ***Making the Transition***

What does this transition mean?

*The expectations are high!* You will be expected to take personal responsibility for your learning by attending classes, reading assigned texts, making good use of the many resources available to you, and asking for help when you need it. Good time management, planning ahead, and setting goals will be traits to leverage for your success.

*The demands are high!* The actual time spent in lectures, labs, service learning and fieldwork will mean consistently busy days. Completing your various assignments to the program's high standards also can be time consuming. Numerous resources are available to help you successfully meet these demands. A key to your success is taking personal responsibility for seeking out these resources and asking for support. And don't forget what was said above about making use of resources ([Counseling and Educational Support Services](#)).

*The composition of your class is different!* You and your Occupational Therapy classmates were carefully selected based on a diverse but rigorous set of criteria. We view each student as being unique and all of you will be expected to complete the program to the best of your individual ability. Students you will meet outside of the Occupational Therapy Curriculum, enrolled in other School of Health Professions, School of Nursing, and School of Medicine programs, will also be serious in their completion of their own professional programs. Your chosen profession has a focus that compliments other health professions, and we encourage you to share insights from your background and your profession as you explore what interprofessional teamwork looks like across a variety of practice settings.

*The focus of your curriculum is on professional practice!* The standards and requirements to graduate from undergraduate college programs are less rigorous than those required for graduate schools and professional programs. In this graduate school curriculum, a student must adhere to higher standards including maintaining a minimum of a 3.0 GPA. These higher standards are necessary to prepare for the rigorous clinical and professional demands that will be part of your training and your professional practice.

## **Benefits of this Transition ...**

Faculty and Staff – Our faculty demonstrate dedication to advancing the occupational therapy profession by facilitating the growth of students in our program. You soon will be professionals and independent problem solvers – and our colleagues! With this in mind, your faculty are diligent in providing you with quality learning experiences and current information using the most

efficient and effective teaching methods possible. The OT faculty gladly serve as role models, demonstrating professional traits while still maintaining unique personal philosophies and characteristics.

Personal Growth and Development. In this curriculum, your transition from an undergraduate college student to a professional occupational therapist will be facilitated by your faculty. We purposely place emphasis on having you approach complex situations with a growth mindset to encourage your personal and professional development. Your personal commitment to education and professional growth will sharpen your skills as you develop a professional perspective necessary to succeed in your chosen field. Many students find this is a time to become more independent, take on more responsibility for personal actions, and to determine the direction of their future career and professional pursuits.

“Marketability”. The marketability of an occupational therapy education is high. The [Federal Bureau of Labor](#) reports OT is a growth profession, and you can expect a variety of job opportunities once you’ve completed the requirements to become an occupational therapist. KU OT grads are highly respected, which will give you an advantage in the job market.

Occupational Therapy is applicable

- to a variety of ages (pediatrics, adolescents, adults, geriatrics),
- to a variety of settings (hospitals, rehabilitation centers, school systems, home health agencies, private practice),
- to a variety of clients (developmentally delayed, mentally impaired, orthopedic, neurologically impaired) and their families,
- to individuals, populations, and communities.

Occupational Therapists may work

- in practice settings of varying size (as few as one therapist to a department with as many as 60),
- for starting salaries typically ranging from \$50,000 to \$80,000,
- in a variety of geographic locations (all over the country, and even internationally).

With such a bright future ahead of you, you should feel good about your career choice, your school selection, and the value of the education you will obtain from our OT Curriculum. The faculty and staff are glad YOU decided to attend the Clinical Doctorate OT program at KU Medical Center!

## ***Professionalism***

As faculty and students associated with a professional program at University of Kansas Medical Center, we endorse the [AOTA standards and ethics policies](#), and the performance standards and policies of both KU Medical Center’s [Graduate Studies](#) and [School of Health Professions](#). Our curriculum has been designed to facilitate development and practice of professional behaviors for students, and to support their life-long learning and professional practice.

We expect our students to express a concern and respect for the rights, dignity, and contributions of all people regardless of differences, in all interactions – including with peers, faculty, and recipients of occupational therapy services. Indeed, an ability to understand the beliefs, attitudes, and values of other individuals and to value their contributions is a crucial trait for successful and effective OT practice. KU Medical Center offers frequent opportunities to

explore and enhance your understanding of [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#). Your professional practice will benefit from thoughtful incorporation of these principles.

As Occupational Therapists, we expect to share a learning environment with you that is mutually stimulating and engaging. We appreciate and anticipate your active participation and enthusiastic contributions to that environment.

## ***Class Expectations***

Not all the “rules” you may have learned at a typical college campus apply to a professional program at an academic medical center campus. A professional curriculum has a specific focus, with only a short time to learn and understand vast amounts of information, and to then engage in practicing this knowledge. The OTE Department is concerned not only with teaching knowledge, but also the clinical reasoning, behaviors, and attitudes necessary for success in the OT profession. Some common areas where differences may occur relative to undergraduate study are outlined below and explained in more detail later in this Handbook.

**Virtual learning** – The past year has forced all educators to re-evaluate delivery of course content and other learning experiences. In the healthcare environment, we further are challenged by needing direct in-person contact for many learning activities while also modeling best practices for limiting spread of disease. These are not new concepts - handwashing has been a common health care practice since 1847 when Semmelweis proposed it to prevent spread of puerperal fever. *{get a head start on understanding how our curriculum works - if you don't know this story or something else said in class, look it up!}* A principle reason our program is so successful is the flexibility with which our faculty and student approach learning. We will strive to provide the best learning environment possible giving the dynamic social health landscape. This means we will likely combine virtual and in-person learning in our curriculum, and we ask students to join with the faculty in being diligent, patient, and willing to adapt to that changing landscape.

**Coronavirus policies** – Regular updates about policies & procedures related COVID-19 and campus or clinic activities are posted on our Institutional webpages. If you have questions, please contact the [OTE department](#).

[KU Medical Center policies](#) - general policies and expectations for the campus  
[School of Health Professions](#) - additional information specific to the SHP

**Attendance** – Regular attendance is expected. Attendance requirements and student responsibilities are outlined in each course syllabus. If you miss a class, you will miss important information – much of which will not be in your textbook or other course materials. It is to your advantage to attend scheduled classes and activities. Those you will serve in the future count on you to be invested and present in your professional learning and training experiences.

**Absences** – Absences may be either excused or unexcused. **Excused absences** include illness or emergency situations. **Unexcused absences** include missing scheduled curricular activities for other reasons, even if faculty are notified ahead of the absence. Examples of unexcused absences include attending a wedding, leaving early for vacation or returning late, and medical or other appointments made during regularly scheduled class time. Reasons for any absence from class or other educational experience must be cleared ahead of time with your instructor or supervisor. Just as you would not miss work without notifying your employer, you must notify your instructor before class if you cannot attend class. Students who do choose to be absent still bear full responsibility for completing course assignments, tests, group

projects, and all other activities. Rescheduling of tests, *etc.* is not required, but may occur at the discretion of the individual faculty member.

**Coming Late to Class and Leaving Early** – Each student is expected to arrive on time and stay for the entire class or laboratory period. Consider this as a behavior all professionals must exhibit on the job.

**Leaving the Class if the Instructor is Late** – Students will be notified promptly if an instructor cannot attend a class. Do not assume you are free to leave if the instructor is 5-10 minutes late. Contact the OTE Department for guidance if it appears the instructor will be more than 10 minutes late.

**Communication with Faculty:** The OTDE program's faculty try to be accessible to our students, even if we may not be available immediately. You are welcome to approach faculty in person, send an email, or leave a telephone message with your call-back information.

**Purchasing and Keeping Textbooks and other important resources** – You are beginning the process of building a “professional reference” library that will be a resource for you on your fieldwork experiences and in practice. Students may feel it is not really necessary to purchase a textbook or other materials required for a class. This is unwise! Instructors consider carefully the materials they will require for class, thoughtfully weighing the merits of the material with factors such as cost, frequency it will be used in this and in other classes, or as a reference in future practice.

Sources other than textbooks also are important – **AOTA Student membership** is required for all students in the OTDE program as this allows you access to professional materials and establishes your membership in our national organization. Students are also required to purchase a membership to **Typhon**, a software package that supports fieldwork experiences. Students will be expected to purchase a membership to **Simucase** for teaching and learning using virtual simulations.

**Studying** – Due to the intensity of the occupational therapy curriculum, most students find they must study more for each class than they have in the past. A general rule of thumb is to anticipate spending approximately two hours of study for each hour spent in class. Many students find maintaining a high GPA in this curriculum requires a consistent, higher, and different type of effort than they have previously needed.

**KU Identification Badges** – You will receive a KU ID at the beginning of your first semester. The OTE Department and the Executive Vice Chancellor *require that you wear your KU ID at all times while on campus*. In addition, to accessing many campus facilities during regular class times, your KU ID badge may be required when you begin visiting various clinics and agencies, or for gaining access to some campus locations or at certain times of the day. Always remember you are wearing a badge that identifies you as a representative of our Occupational Therapy Education Department and the University of Kansas Medical Center community.

**Work – Life Balance** – The increased expectations and workload inherent in pursuing a professional graduate degree often require students to reassess how they spend their time. Time management of academic activities and obligations is an important trait contributing to success. On the other hand, our high-achieving students tend to become focused on grades. As a faculty, we remind you that an OT should have a professional and personal understanding of the importance for striking a healthy balance of work and non-work occupations. As you study about occupations important for a good quality of life, consider how these insights apply to your



own activities. The [Counseling and Educational Support Services](#) staff are particularly skilled in supporting students in developing skills for time management and achieving a healthy balance of work and play.

## All about the Department of Occupational Therapy Education

### ***Vision, Mission, and Philosophy***

The Occupational Therapy Education Program at the University of Kansas has adopted the following statements that outline our vision, mission, and philosophy. These statements summarize our dreams, directions, and beliefs and provide the foundation for the design of the curriculum and the educational experiences offered to our students.

#### **Vision Statement**

To transform occupational therapy and influence other health professions through leadership, education and discovery.

#### **Mission Statement**

To develop learners who will impact the health and occupations of people and their communities through innovative and collaborative practice, education, research, and leadership.

#### **Philosophy**

##### *Our Beliefs about Occupational Therapy:*

- Adjustments to context and activities support participation in occupations in everyday life
- Best practice promotes participation in authentic contexts
- Best practice entails producing and using evidence

##### *Our Beliefs about Human Beings:*

- People have the right and capacity to direct their own lives
- People's characteristics are strengths which support participation in everyday life
- Participation in everyday life involves interaction between the person, task, and context
- Quality of life depends on engagement in occupation

##### *Our beliefs about Human Learning:*

- Interprofessional collaboration enriches education and practice
- Learning is enhanced through supported discovery and reflection
- Learning is gained through life, education, and work experiences

### ***Faculty Roles***

Faculty members have responsibilities in three major areas of work – teaching, research, and service. To students, teaching is the most visible activity, but faculty also plan, develop, and conduct research to contribute to the knowledge and evidence supporting occupational therapy practice. You may participate with faculty on aspects of their research as part of your curriculum; if you have an interest in research you are welcome to seek out faculty at any time to discuss the possibility of taking part in on-going research activities. Service activities are varied and include administrative tasks, involvement in department, school, and university committees, and treatment or consultation in clinical settings at KU Medical Center and in the community. Other aspects of service include being involved in professional activities,

participating on local, state, and national committees and boards, and supporting community organizations.

When you can't locate a faculty member it may be because he or she is attending a committee meeting, providing OT intervention, working in our community, or collecting and analyzing research data! While faculty may welcome a drop-in conversation, scheduling an appointment is a more certain way to be sure you will have time together. Most faculty members can be reached by email to schedule an appointment. If email is unsuccessful, you may call and leave a voicemail for the faculty member you are trying to reach.

While faculty do have other responsibilities, we have chosen to work in academia because we enjoy interacting with students and supporting them to become OT professionals. Seek out your faculty – whether for answers to questions about course content, for guidance for your professional development, or simply just to get to know us better! The OT Department website has [short biographies for the faculty and staff](#) that provide some information about each of us.

**Class Advisor:** Your class will have one faculty member serving as the class advisor throughout your entire program. The advisor is the first person you may consider speaking with if problems arise, but also should be someone to turn to when you need answers to questions, for networking with other people on campus, or to be a resource generally. Make a point of meeting your advisor early and then keeping in touch as time goes by.

**Service Learning liaison:** Students will participate at service learning sites throughout your first year of classes. OT Department faculty serve as liaisons with these service learning sites, so you will have regular contact with the faculty member at your site. This is a good opportunity to get to know that faculty member outside of class, and to ask questions and gain insights about the curriculum, the profession, or living in Kansas City.

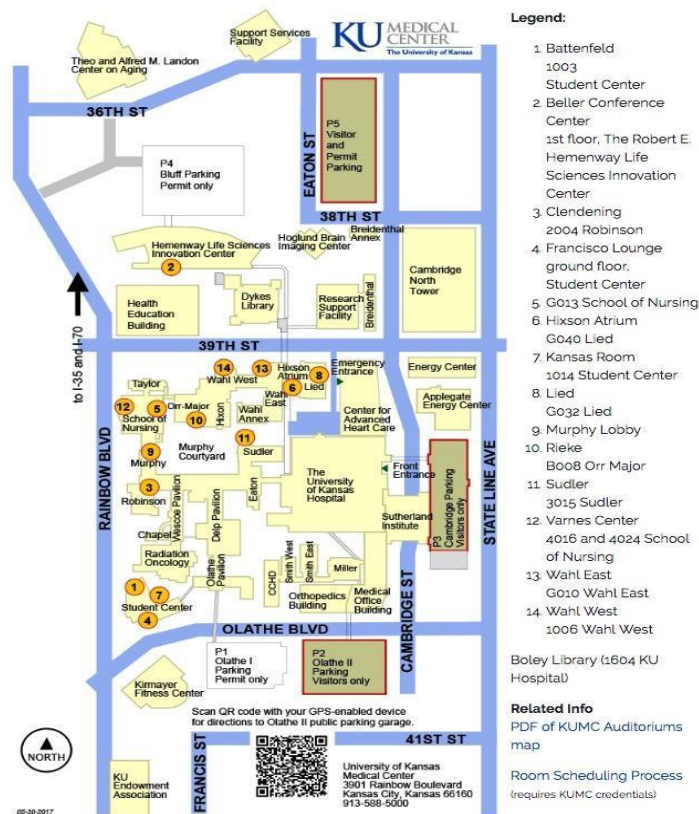
## Places I should know:

For more maps visit:

<http://www.kumc.edu/about-us/maps-and-contact-information.html>

**KU Medical Center and KU Health Services:** These entities share the same campus and are

**Campus map with major auditoriums and public meeting locations**



deeply intertwined, but they are administratively distinct. “KU Medical Center” (KUMC) refers to the professional and graduate academic programs offered by the University of Kansas through the School of Health Professions, School of Medicine, School of Nursing, and School of Pharmacy. The “University of Kansas Health System” (UKHS) refers to the hospital and associated clinics, both those in the 39<sup>th</sup> & Rainbow neighborhood as well as satellite clinics such as those at Med West and at Indian Creek.

**OTE Department and OT Clinical Services:** Faculty and students often refer to our program as “OT,” although this risks confusion with OT Clinical Services in the KU Health System. Be careful in your phrasing!

There are several places within the Medical Center that you should know of; places to eat, sleep, study, rest, work, etc. The locations listed below

are where you will probably spend a significant period of your time as an OT student:

- OTE Departmental office, 3033 Robinson Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- Dykes Library, on the north side of 39<sup>th</sup> Street, one block east of Rainbow Blvd
- KUMC Bookstore, mezzanine level of Orr-Major, NE corner of the building (OM G005)
- Health Education Building – most of the teaching classrooms, simulation labs
- Nursing Education Building – Rooms B018 (classroom) and B016 (lab) on the basement level
- Orr-Major (OM) Building – Bookstore, classrooms

### Locations of other important resources:

- [Student Counseling Services](#), ground floor the Student Center, next to Francisco Lounge and Battenfeld Auditorium, northeast corner of Olathe Blvd. & Rainbow Blvd
- [Student Health Services](#) is located on 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Student Center, northeast corner of Olathe Blvd. & Rainbow Blvd
- [Academic Accommodation Services](#), 2nd floor of Dykes Library, room G012
- [Office of the Registrar](#) is located on the ground floor of Dykes Library, room G035
- [Student Financial Aid](#) is located on the ground floor of Dykes Library, room G035
- [Office of Student Life](#) is located on the 2nd floor of the Orr-Major building, room 1006
- [Center for Child Health and Development](#), on Olathe Blvd. on the south side of campus, just west of the Medical Office Building (MOB)
- [Kirmayer Fitness Center](#), at the southeast corner of Olathe Blvd. and Rainbow Blvd.

## Where to Study:

**HEB:** [Health Education Building \(HEB\)](#) is a resource for new and continuing students, and houses classrooms, study spaces, and areas for student gatherings. Scheduled class activities have precedence over out-of-class study. Please also observe signage indicating rooms dedicated for special use (e.g., small rooms on 1<sup>st</sup> floor perimeter).

**Dykes Library:** [Dykes Library](#) is another popular place to study. It is spacious with comfortable chairs and carrels on both first and second floors. Study rooms are available for group study on a first come, first serve basis. Individual computers stations are also available. You should take time to become familiar with the Dykes computer testing labs. The library is open to KUMC students 7 days a week, from 7 or 8am until 10 or 11pm (These times may be altered by COVID policies, see: <http://library.kumc.edu/about-the-library/hours-and-access.xml>) although you will need to use your KU ID to access the building after 6pm M-F and on the weekends. Dykes Library also houses the Registrar's Office and Office of Student Financial Aid (1<sup>st</sup> floor) and the Office of Graduate Studies and the Academic Accommodation Services (2<sup>nd</sup> floor).

**Orr-Major:** An under-recognized study area, Orr-Major is open 24 hours a day. The first-floor classrooms in O-M may be used anytime for studying, group discussions, or practicing presentations except when classes are scheduled in that room. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Orr-Major also has study spaces that seldom are used, and many of the hallways in this building have couches, as well as other nooks and crannies in secluded locations. O-M also has spaces suited for studying on the ground floor in Stoland lounge, and around the corner from Stoland lounge at the south end of the building. FYI – that long tunnel you'll find at the southeast corner of the building on the basement floor will take you to the basement floor of the Hospital (a quick and dry way to get to the cafeteria on rainy days) while the tunnel on the southwest corner of the basement floor will take you to B018 of the SON (one of your regular classrooms). Orr-Major also houses the Office of Student Life (2<sup>nd</sup> floor south of the elevators) and the [Thrive Food Pantry](#).

*COVID-19 restrictions limit availability of food service and study spaces on campus and the hours of operation for off-campus spaces. Please observe proper safety, sanitary, and social distancing precautions while restrictions are in place.*

**KUMC coronavirus information:**

<http://www.kumc.edu/covid-19.html>

**Wyandotte County coronavirus information:**

<https://wyandotte-county-covid-19-hub-unifiedgov.hub.arcgis.com/>

## Dining

**Bell Café** (ground floor, Bell Hospital; [menu](#)) is open 6:30 am-8pm M-F and 7 am-6:30pm weekends and holidays, with an adjacent vending area open 24/7. **D&G Café** (Level 1, Cambridge North Tower) is open 24/7. A variety of restaurants also are located west of campus along Rainbow Blvd, and east of campus, along 39<sup>th</sup> St.

- Coffee** In addition to obtaining coffee from the dining service locations, there are coffee shops in the Hospital complex (Cambridge Tower, Heart Hospital, Medical Pavilion), several more in walking distance (east on 39<sup>th</sup> St), with others south on Rainbow Blvd (Espresso Viale, at 47<sup>th</sup> St) and on State Line Road (Hi Hat, at 51<sup>st</sup> St), and even more in Westport and the Country Club Plaza.
- Other** If you want a change of scenery but still need to study, or you need to put some distance between you and the campus, there are nearby branches of the KC Public Library in the Plaza (with a coffee shop) and in Westport. Just east of the Country Club Plaza are the Linda Hall Library of Technology, the UMKC Library, and the Rockhurst University library. Both the Kansas City, Missouri and Johnson County public library systems have multiple branches throughout the metro area and a shared borrowing program. You really should “checkout” the [Central branch](#) of the KCMO library system, as well as the various lecture series sponsored by these libraries.
- More places?** Let us know! There are many unexpected and hidden areas to sequester yourself scattered about at the medical center, where you can find coffee, lobbies with comfortable chairs, and other places less well-traveled that make for quiet and secluded places to study. An off the beaten path hint: The [Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art](#) is a great place to study and relax, not only having quiet spots for studying but great art and traveling exhibitions as distractions, free WIFI, free admission, a restaurant ([Rozelle Court](#)) and a coffee shop ([Thou Mayest at Nelson-Atkins](#)) – and free on-street parking (along Oak St.) or in the lot at the northwest corner of E. 45<sup>th</sup> St. and Rockhill Road).

## KU Medical Center Policies

Please refer to the following link to obtain complete KUMC & School of Health Professions Policies and Procedures by which all current students are bound. These [Student Handbooks are available on-line.](#)

### [Academic Supports](#)

Learning assistance, academic performance enhancement and psychological services at KUMC are free, confidential, and available at [Student Counseling & Educational Support Services](#) by calling 913-588-6580 or visiting G116 Student Center.

### [Compliance Training for Students](#)

All KU Medical Center students are required to complete annual compliance training prior to and annually thereafter during the fall training window for students. Failure to complete the training will result in a hold placed on your student account that will prevent future enrollment until the training is completed. Students will receive instructions by email about how to access the Compliance training modules based on access granted by using your username and password.

**In addition to the regular, annual training modules all student must complete the [COVID-19 Safety Training module](#) prior to arrival on campus, available on-line at: [kumc.sabacloud.com](http://kumc.sabacloud.com).**



The COVID-19 pandemic may, at times, impact our campus and the delivery of certain services, classroom behaviors, and training experiences. Our faculty will strive to provide the highest quality experience possible, identifying novel and innovative options while eliminating factors that otherwise may limit your performance. All students, however, have a responsibility to practice appropriate safety measures to ensure the best chances for the continued health of your student peers as well as faculty, staff, and clients.

### **[Equal Opportunity/Title IX Policy](#)**

KU Medical Center is committed to the elimination and prevention of discrimination or harassment based on race, religion, color, ethnicity, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, age, status as a veteran, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information or retaliation. KU Medical Center and the KUMC Sexual Harassment Policy also prohibit all forms of sexual violence, including domestic violence, relationship violence, staking and assault. Allegations of violations of the University's Nondiscrimination Policy are investigated in accordance with the Discrimination Complaint Resolution Process. Additionally, KU Medical Center prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint or otherwise participates in the complaint process. Equal Opportunity policies and procedure are available [here](#). If you believe that you are being discriminated against or harassed, contact Natalie Holick, KUMC's Title IX Coordinator, at (913) 588-8011 or [noholick@kumc.edu](mailto:noholick@kumc.edu) to discuss your rights and options for filing a complaint or taking other steps to help stop the behavior.

### **[Academic Accommodation Policy](#)**

Any student who needs an accommodation because of a disability in order to complete the course requirements should contact Cynthia Ukoko, Senior Coordinator for Academic Accommodations for Students and Residents in the Academic Accommodations Services office as soon as they are admitted to the program. The office is in 1040 Dykes Library; the phone number is (913) 945-7035. You may also email Cynthia Ukoko at [cukoko@kumc.edu](mailto:cukoko@kumc.edu). Online appointments may also be made at <https://medconsult.kumc.edu>. For online information about academic accommodations, please go to [www.kumc.edu/student-services](http://www.kumc.edu/student-services).

### **[Religious Accommodation Policy](#)**

KU Medical Center respects the religious diversity of its students and will make good faith efforts to provide reasonable religious accommodations for the sincerely held religious beliefs, practices or observances of its students when they conflict with University policy or procedure. Such accommodations must not fundamentally affect the University's mission or commitment to patient care or otherwise create an undue hardship. If you wish to submit a request for religious accommodations, please complete this online form with as much lead time as possible to allow time to consider the request and plan alternative learning options: <https://form.jotform.us/71005615090142>

### **[Childbirth Accommodation Policy](#)**

The University of Kansas Medical Center acknowledges the years spent in graduate and professional degree programs can be prime childbearing years for students. KU Medical Center wishes to assert itself as an institution valuing family-friendly policies and has adopted a student-specific [Childbirth Accommodation policy](#). This policy illustrates a commitment by KU Medical Center to diversity and inclusion that allows the institution to recruit and retain the highest quality students.

## **Relationship Policy**

KU Medical Center's policy on Relationships supports the integrity and excellence of our academic and working environments. It is KU Medical Center's position that consensual romantic or sexual relationships between individuals of unequal power are unwise, often contrary to professional ethics and create a conflict of interest even if the relationship is consensual. Questions of fairness, bias, and conflict also arise when members of the same family supervise one another.

In the event that a consensual relationship prohibited by this policy exists or develops, the individual in the position of authority has a duty to report such relationship and cooperate in removing the conflict. Employees also must report existence of any familial relationship that may pose a conflict of interest at the time of application, employment, or when the relationship or conflict develops.

## **Social Media Policy**

The University of Kansas Medical Center recognizes that social networking websites and applications are an important and timely means of communication. Students are reminded that they should have no expectation of privacy on social networking sites. Students must also be aware that posting certain information is illegal. Violation may expose the offender to criminal and civil liability. Offenses may be considered non-academic misconduct and be subject to the appropriate policies and procedures.

The following actions are strictly forbidden:

- You may not disclose the personal health information of other individuals. Removal of an individual's name alone does not constitute proper de-identification of protected health information. Inclusion of data such as age, gender, race, diagnosis, date of evaluation, or type of treatment or the use of a highly specific medical photograph (such as a before/after photograph of a patient or a photograph of a patient from a service-learning site) may still allow recognition of the identity of a specific individual.
- You may not report private academic information of another student or trainee. Such information is covered by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and includes, but is not limited to course grades, narrative evaluations, examination scores, or adverse academic actions.
- You may not present yourself as an official representative or spokesperson for the University of Kansas, affiliate organizations, the OTE Department, or individual faculty or staff members when posting information on social networking sites. Although you have the right to express political or other views publicly, do not use an email or any other account that identifies you as a member of the KU Medical Center community.
- You may not represent yourself as another person, real or fictitious, or otherwise attempt to obscure your identity as a means to circumvent the prohibitions listed above and below.

In addition to the absolute prohibitions listed above, the actions listed below strongly are discouraged. Violations of these suggested guidelines may be considered unprofessional behavior and may form a basis for disciplinary action.

- Use of vulgar or profane language.
- Display of language or photographs that implies disrespect for any individual or group because of age, race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

- Presentation of personal photographs or photographs of others that may reasonably be interpreted as condoning irresponsible use of alcohol, substance abuse, or sexual promiscuity.
- Presentation of personal engagement in illegal activities, including use of recreational drugs.
- Posting of potentially inflammatory or unflattering material on another individual's website or social media platform.

When using any social networking websites/applications, students are strongly encouraged to use a personal e-mail address, one that is separate from their KUMC email address, as their primary means of identification. Individuals also should make every effort to present themselves in a mature, responsible, and professional manner. Discourse should always be civil and respectful.

### **Weapons on Campus policy**

KU Medical Center prohibits faculty, staff, students, and visitors from carrying weapons of any type on its Kansas City, KS campus. For additional information, please see the [KUMC Procedures for Implementing University-Wide Weapons Policy](#). Students who conceal carry on the Lawrence or Edwards campuses are responsible for making alternative arrangements when attending classes in Kansas City. Students can transfer a handgun from a backpack or purse to a secure location such as the trunk of their locked vehicle. Individuals who violate the weapons policy or procedures may be asked to leave campus with the weapon and may face disciplinary action under the appropriate university code of conduct

### ***Notification of Student Expectations and Activities***

At the beginning of each course, students will receive course syllabi, each containing a description for that course of all evaluation activities, including performance requirements, observations, papers, major examinations, any final examinations, or other required activities, as well as a statement of policies governing the use of individual performance results in computing and assigning grades.

A timetable of class meetings, activities, assignment deadlines, etc. also will be provided at the start of each course. Every instructor will make clear the rules for the preparation of classroom assignments, collateral reading, notebooks, or other outside work so that students may not, through ignorance, subject themselves to the charge of academic misconduct.

## **General Safety and Emergency Procedures**

Occupational Therapy students are expected to become familiar with every emergency procedure adopted by KU Medical Center. Each year, the Department of Occupational Therapy Education will conduct a review of these procedures with each student class.

### **Emergency communication protocols:**

<http://www.kumc.edu/emergency-management/campus-emergency-communications.html>

**Alertus beacons:** These yellow wall-mounted beacons will siren, strobe, and display scrolling text information in the case of emergency. The same system will deliver an emergency pop-up to all network-connected computers.



**RAVE text messaging and RAVE Guardian app:** Emergency messages will be delivered to your mobile device. You must download the app and register with the RAVE system to access these services.

**Email:** Emergency messages will be titled “EMERGENCY ALERT” or “CRITICAL INFORMATION”

**Important: These systems will not be used to broadcast a fire alarm.** Just those buildings in the immediate area of an activated fire alarm will be notified through the visual strobe & audio siren system. As a reminder, any doors having a magnetic lock or magnetic doorstop should never be propped open!

**Fire Safety:** (*Code Red*)

When a fire is reported or when the automatic fire alarm system is activated, a Code Red will be called. In some buildings the alarm will sound for 30 seconds after which the strobe lights will continue flashing until the “All Clear” has sounded. In other buildings the alarms will continue to ring until the “All Clear” has sounded. Where possible, the Code Red will be paged overhead. The information announced will include the words “Code Red,” the building name, and the room or area location.

**Tornado:** (*Code Gray*)

**Tornado Watch:** set by the National Weather Service when conditions *could produce* a tornado in the Johnson/Wyandotte County area.

**Tornado Warning:** announced by the National Weather Service *when a tornado has been sighted* in the Kansas City area.

**Termination of Code Gray:** an all clear will be called when the tornado or severe weather no longer poses an immediate threat. The operator will announce over the overhead page “**CODE GRAY ALL CLEAR**” after the Weather Service or the Civil Defense personnel have declared the treat to have passed.

## Communication is a key to success!

### Faculty-Student Communication

Faculty-student communication is vital to our program although students may be hesitant to approach faculty and faculty may not realize a student wishes to talk. A genuine two-way dialogue between an instructor and the student is essential so they may speak together to optimize the learning environment. All students should feel free to initiate discussions with any faculty member, while knowing faculty members also may take the initiative to open discussions with students.

### Avenues of Communication

There are many ways to discover and influence what is happening around you. Some of the avenues of communication include.

**Email** – Department staff, faculty and students use email as a primary mode of communication. Students can send or receive email messages using Outlook/Exchange included with the MS Office suite of software (available to you free of charge while enrolled in your program). Outlook also can be used to schedule appointments and meetings with

faculty and other students. All incoming students will be required to attend a Computer Seminar. At that time, students will receive detailed instructions on the Medical Center's e-mail procedures. Your KUMC account ([xxx@kumc.edu](mailto:xxx@kumc.edu)) is the means used by KU Medical Center and your faculty to convey official notices, announcements, and other important information (such as financial aid, enrollment, etc.). **It is important to check your KUMC email account regularly – preferably daily.** You should communicate with faculty and staff using only your KUMC email. Personal email addresses get caught in spam and are not considered official email while you are enrolled in your program.

**Blackboard** – The Blackboard education portal is used for delivery of course content, communication, and submission of assignments. Course-specific and program-wide announcements may be posted in Blackboard – check regularly for updates!

**Virtual learning** – Educators recognize the importance of using virtual technology to facilitate effective learning. Faculty in your program take great care to match the course content with the format used to deliver that content, and most classes have a mix of in-person, virtual, and experiential formats.

**Faculty member** – The faculty members of courses in which you are enrolled want to help you learn. We encourage you to meet personally with your faculty, whether to ask questions, discuss course content, or to hear that person's perspective on OT practice.

**Department Chair** – The Chairperson has oversight of all degree programs offered by the OTE Department including the OTDE program, has final responsibility as approver and arbitrator for all Department-level activities, and participates in School- and University-level administrative activities. As a faculty member, the Chair participates in teaching, research, and clinical service, while also having a greater administrative role than do most faculty. The Chair of OTE also serves as the Program Director for the OTDE curriculum, although these roles sometimes are separate at other institutions.

**Program Director** – The Program Director is the person having principal responsibility for interacting with ACOTE (the national accreditation body for entry-level OT programs) to assure compliance with ACOTE standards. As such, this person is required to be an OTR. The Program Director is available to meet with students individually or as groups. On occasion "lunch with the Program Director" is scheduled to allow each class to meet informally with the program director to share new ideas or voice concerns.

**Course Evaluations** – At the end of each course, we ask each student to fill out an anonymous course evaluation. This provides an opportunity for each student to give feedback to the instructor about content and teaching strategies – both the good points and those that need improvement. This feedback is important for maintaining the consistently high quality of our courses and for improving content delivery. This feedback also is an essential component of the accreditation process for the OTDE program. Students should know the feedback is anonymous, is collapsed and compiled across the evaluations for that course, and the faculty member is not able to review any of the compiled feedback until after the final semester grades for the course have been submitted.

**Faculty Scheduled Time to Meet with Students** – Appointments can be made by emailing faculty to request a meeting time.

**Messages** – To leave a message that needs immediate response or that must be communicated to faculty within a specific time frame, please leave the message with a front

office member or contact the faculty member via email. You should consider leaving a call-back number and suggest a few times when you are most likely to be available to take a call.

**Enrollment** – Courses required for the OTDE curriculum are predetermined. Students are notified by email by the OTE Department about the classes they are to enroll in each semester. Students will self-enroll using the ‘Enroll and Pay’ website (<https://sa.ku.edu/index.html>) during the enrollment periods prior to the start of each term. Payment for tuition is done online and the deadline for payment is determined when you enroll. The KU Medical Center Registrar distributes the bill for tuition via the student’s KUMC email account. Holds by various University departments are imposed on a student’s enrollment and will prevent your access to campus resources (including email and other electronic educational supports). It is the student’s responsibility to resolve all holds so they may enroll in a timely manner. Examples of enrollment holds: Insurance, Health, Parking, and Financial Aid. Contact the appropriate office to resolve the hold.

Please note that the course meeting times listed on the ‘Enroll and Pay’ website do not necessarily match the actual locations and times for our classes. Instead, refer to the schedules provided to you prior to the start of each term by the OTE Department.

**Instructor & Course Evaluations** – An important part of all learning and teaching is regular evaluation. Your evaluation of instructors and course content is very important in continually improving classroom experience, and both are required for the continued accreditation of the entry-level OTDE program. Student evaluations are particularly helpful in gauging the quality of a course and its content. Your evaluations are taken seriously, and they deserve your careful thought. As each term progresses, take time occasionally to summarize strengths of a particular assignment and to make suggestions for improvement. This way you won’t lose track of these valuable observations and can simply copy your accumulated comments onto the evaluation forms provided at the end of the term. Even though your suggestions may be focused on a specific class, your input will help to influence other courses in the future. The OTE Department will provide information about how the evaluations will be conducted as the term draws to a close. Students can be assured, however, all evaluations and feedback will be kept anonymous.

## Problems and Solutions

### *What to do if ...*

This section provides basic guidelines on how to tackle problems or meet basic needs that arise on a day-to-day basis. You also might consider seeking guidance from your academic advisor.

### **Computer Resources**

The student fee you paid includes the use of computer services and labs at KU Medical Center. During the first week of school you will be oriented to the computer resources available on campus. There are personal computer work stations located in Dykes Library and elsewhere on campus. WIFI access to the internet is available throughout the campus and is accessible by all students using your KUMC username & password. Our IT Security experts recommend you access the internet using the “kumc-secure” WIFI network.

Support is available to students through the Jayhawk Tech Clinic/IT Help Desk if you have questions, problems, or a malfunctioning computer. You can visit in person (Taylor 3021; you

may need to schedule an in-person appointment), call 913-945-9999, option 2, or [submit a support ticket online](#).

### **I Need Copies**

If you need handouts or other information duplicated, photocopy machines and printers are available in the library and other locations across campus, with access both through campus WIFI and as direct connections. If you want a copy printed on paper, be sure to take media (e.g., flash drive, etc.) and printing paper with you. Students must obtain permission from an OT faculty or staff member before printing materials on the OT department's photocopier. .

### **I Need Evaluation Kits/Equipment to Practice OT Procedures**

As you move through this curriculum, you will be responsible for learning many assessments used in occupational therapy. Sometimes you will be required to practice and administer these assessments on each other and in the community. Please speak with an OTE staff member to check-out the materials you'll need.

Assessments and equipment on reserve are expensive! The student who checks out the materials is liable for any damage or loss and will be responsible for all necessary reimbursements(s) to the OTE Department.

### **Access to Medical Care**

In the event of an emergency, call 9-1-1 or go directly to the nearest emergency room.

[Student Health Services](#) (1012 Student Center) offers primary care services. Please visit the [Student Health Services website](#) for a full listing of services, hours and contact information.

All on-campus students are required to have health insurance and to submit proof of their insurance each semester. Health insurance is available to eligible students through [United Healthcare Student Resources](#). Please visit the [Student Health Insurance webpage](#) for details

### **I Don't Feel Well**

If you don't feel well, do not come to class and consider the implications of passing an illness along to your peers, patients, or clients. Email your instructor and if appropriate telephone the OTE Office (913-588-7195) as soon as possible when you are unable to attend class due to illness. If you are ill or hospitalized, it is your responsibility to contact the course instructor prior to the time the class is scheduled to begin. Review the other sections in this document regarding [excused vs. unexcused absences](#). Make-up assignments and/or tests may be offered at the discretion of the instructor.

### **Coronavirus/COVID-19 concerns:**

[\*\(This webpage provides the most current Coronavirus information\)\*](#)

- Call your primary care physician if you think you have symptoms related to the COVID-19.
- The [Student Health Center](#) can help guide you navigate the testing process.
- You should be aware that self-test kits may not be covered by health insurance, are expensive, and these test results will not be accepted by most clinical sites.
- For questions related to clinical and fieldwork experiences, contact the [OTE Department](#).

### **DO call the KUHS COVID hotline at 913-588-1600 if:**

- You have been exposed to a COVID-19 positive person. Exposed means:
  - you were not wearing a mask,
  - you were within 6 feet of the positive person; and

- you were exposed for more than 15 minutes.
- You have symptoms or are sick.
- You have tested positive for COVID-19.

**DO NOT** call the UKUS COVID hotline if:

- You have had distant contact with a known COVID-19 positive person.
- You have traveled to Arizona or Florida. Follow the [Kansas Department of Health and Environment](#) guidelines and quarantine for 14 days after arrival in Kansas.
- You have had COVID-19. Follow the [Wyandotte County guidelines](#) and return to work/campus after you are symptom-free for 10 days.

### **I Need Information About Financial Assistance**

Students should contact the [Financial Aid Office](#) (ground floor, Dykes Library; 913-588-5170) directly to inquire about eligibility for assistance. The Financial Aid Office administers disbursement of all university scholarship awards as well as federal loan assistance, and Veterans benefits.

### **Scholarships & Awards**

Numerous states, federal and private agencies and groups offer scholarships to occupational therapy students. The types of scholarships are varied. A scholarship may be an outright financial gift with no obligation or may require you to gradually pay back the money after graduation. Some organizations offer financial scholarships if the recipient agrees to work for a specified period of time for the sponsor after graduation. Students should investigate carefully to determine the potential impact of any additional funding may have on the level of current financial aid being received.

In addition to speaking with your academic advisor, information about these opportunities can be found in several places online:

- [OT Department Scholarship webpage](#)
- [School of Health Professions webpage](#)
- [Academic Works scholarship database](#)
  - Sign in with your KUMC username & password
  - First time users will need to complete the “general application”
  - You will then be auto-matched opportunities, or you may search more broadly. Be sure to read the qualifying details carefully before beginning any application process to be sure you really do meet the qualifying criteria!

### **Reciprocal Tuition Agreement - Kansas Board of Regents and Iowa Board of Regents**

In order to expand student access to academic programming not available in our respective states and to promote the efficient utilization of existing resources, the Kansas Board of Regents and the Iowa Board of Regents agree to establish a reciprocal agreement for Kansas residents desiring to study in the actuarial science program in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Iowa and for Iowa residents desiring to study occupational therapy in the School of Health Professions at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

### **I Need Information About Academic Supports**

Students often hesitate to seek support, but this is an important aspect of a student’s accurate self-assessment. This also is an important part of a faculty member’s role – and is an option used more frequently than most students realize! Students who previously have not had to structure study time on a college campus often come to the Medical Center expecting the same informal atmosphere. However, the course content in a professional curriculum often requires

more concentrated and focused study habits. A study group can be a helpful supplement to the strategy of studying independently.

Students enrolled in either in-person or on-line classes may receive academic assistance through [Counseling and Educational Support Services](#). This resource is staffed by highly experienced and insightful counselor who have been especially helpful to students in establishing or adjusting study habits, and improving test taking or writing skills. Their phone number is (913) 588-4688.

In some cases, peer or more senior OT students have volunteered to serve as **student tutors**. If you wish to be a tutor or need the assistance of a student tutor, be sure to ask the instructor if that option is available for his/her course. You may wish to consider this option yourself – teaching others is the best way to understand content yourself!

**Course instructors** are important resources for students in need of academic assistance! The instructor may not recognize a student needs assistance until after a pivotal exam or other evaluation. It, therefore, is imperative that you assume responsibility to try and identify the problems you're having in a particular course and outline topics or develop a list of questions that you can discuss with the instructor, and then approach the instructor before you fall behind in your coursework. A proactive approach will be beneficial for making sure you address all relevant areas – as well as make efficient use of your individual time with the instructor. It also is wise to recognize and address these needs earlier in the course rather than later.

If you have academic difficulties in several different courses, you should consider meeting with your academic advisor in addition to your course instructors. Your advisor can help inform you of important resources and problem-solve with you to develop a plan of action to best meet your individual needs across the curriculum. It particularly is important to meet with your advisor prior to when academic problems occur if there are extenuating circumstances that influence your academic performance (*i.e.*, serious illness, personal/family crisis). Remember that most faculty also once were stressed-out students and are likely to be sympathetic when asked for insights and support.

### **Extenuating Circumstances are Interfering with My Academic Performance**

You have been admitted to the full-time program in the occupational therapy curriculum. If you feel you are struggling or think you cannot continue your present program due to extenuating circumstances, you have the option of scheduling an appointment with your academic advisor, who can work with you to explore possible strategies.

### **I'm Stressed Out!**

First, it is important to know most students who have completed the first and second semesters of this curriculum report a high level of stress, so this feeling is normal. The adjustment to the Medical Center, urban life, new friends, a new course of study, *etc.* can be stressful. However, students tend to adjust well after developing various coping strategies. An excellent way of coping with stress is through establishing a support system such as a student support group. You should consider speaking with your class advisor, who can help guide you toward strategies to help address your needs. Another mechanism, which is offered at no additional cost to students, is accessing the [student services counseling](#) program. Professionals offer good information about stress management, preventing burn-out, dealing/coping with stress, *etc.* Counseling services are also available through other facilities outside of the Medical Center depending on your individual insurance benefits. The [Kirmayer fitness center](#) regularly offered stress management and group exercise programs.



## I Need to Work

*Working too many hours (typically more than 10-15 hours per week) while taking classes is the most common factor among past students who have experienced academic problems in our program.* With the expense of a college education, many students need to work during the school year. Students accepting admission into the KU Medical Center Occupational Therapy Education program are, however, expected to prioritize their responsibilities. **Class attendance and fieldwork appointments must be top priorities.** With this understanding, full-time work is not realistic and can lead to decreased performance in the classroom, and/or health problems. Reasonable work hours can, however, be incorporated into your schedule. You will be expected to arrange your work schedule to accommodate class and fieldwork requirements. This includes allowing adequate time for study. Consider speaking with your class advisor to discuss what may be a feasible work schedule.

## Student Representatives & Organizations

All students are encouraged to live the philosophy of OT and maintain a balance of work, self-care, and play activities. Membership in professional and/or school organizations provide students with opportunities for personal/professional growth as well as a chance to relax. Participating is a great way to make new friends and share ideas. Please visit these websites for more information or contact the faculty member serving as a liaison for that group.

- **American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA):** <https://www.aota.org/>
- **Assembly of Student Delegates (ASD) organization:** <https://www.aota.org/AboutAOTA/Get-Involved/ASD.aspx>
- **Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD):** <https://www.cotad.org/>
- **Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) ALL STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO BECOME ACTIVE MEMBERS!** <https://kumc.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/sota/roster>
- **Kansas Occupational Therapy Association (KOTA).** <https://kotaonline.org/>
- **School of Health Professions (SHP).** Students serve on various School of Health Professions and University committees, including the SHP Student Senate and the Graduate Student Council. These committees are listed in the [SHP Student Handbook](https://www.kumc.edu/school-of-health-professions/academics/student-handbook.html). <https://www.kumc.edu/school-of-health-professions/academics/student-handbook.html>
- **The Beat@KUMC:** Connects KUMC students with student organizations, campus events, and university programs. <https://kumc.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/sota>

## Fieldwork Experiences

### Level I Fieldwork

Level I Fieldwork, or what we call “Service Learning,” involves collaborative work with community partners, individuals living in the community, and interprofessional teams. Service Learning occurs over the duration of the first year of course work (i.e., Fall and Spring semesters). Students connect class content to real life (and vice versa) by engaging in applied learning activities in the classroom and the community. As stated in the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) Standards:

*“The goal of Fieldwork Level I is to introduce students to the fieldwork experience, to apply knowledge to practice, and to develop understanding of the needs of clients.”* Level I Fieldwork can be supervised by a range of professionals including occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, psychologists, physician assistants, teachers, social workers, physical therapists, and more.

Students develop and are formally assessed on professional behaviors, attitudes, and skills during Level I Fieldwork. Generally, student experiences and expectations progress from participating in observations to administering evaluations, developing intervention plans, and assisting with interventions at the individual, group, and population level.

Students select their top three choices for Service-Learning Sites prior to starting the Fall semester and the Fieldwork Team determines the final placement. Meeting times for Service Learning are scheduled during times students are not required to be in regularly scheduled class. These meeting times range from 2-4 hours and occur 1 day per week. Students may not miss class or required class activities to participate in Service-Learning Activities.

Students need to make arrangements at the beginning of each semester for the dates for Service-Learning activities so that work and life responsibilities can be adjusted to allow time to meet fieldwork requirements. Dates and times for Service Learning are provided at the beginning of each semester to allow students to plan accordingly.

Students are not expected to attend Service Learning during academic calendar breaks, such as Winter Break and Spring Break. Regular attendance on scheduled Service-Learning days is expected. Refer to attendance policies within course syllabi for further information regarding attendance expectations.

## **Level II Fieldwork**

### General Information

Many graduates describe Level II Fieldwork as the highlight of their educational experiences. It provides an opportunity for students to implement their knowledge base and begin to “think and act like a therapist.” The Fieldwork Team works to meet the individual, educational, and personal needs of an entire class of students, as well as meet the standards established by the ACOTE and KU Medical Center’s OTE Department. The Fieldwork Team develops and maintains relationships with many outstanding student-training centers on a local and national level.

As stated in the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) Standards:

*“The goal of Level II Fieldwork is to develop competent, entry-level, generalist occupational therapists. Level II fieldwork shall be integral to the program’s curriculum design and must include an in-depth experience in delivering occupational therapy services to clients, focusing on the application of purposeful and meaningful occupation and research, administration and management of occupational therapy services. It is recommended that the student be exposed to a variety of clients across the life span and to a variety of settings.”*

The selection of fieldwork for an individual student is a collaborative process. Each student’s needs and preferences are considered, and the final decision for all fieldwork placements resides with the Fieldwork Team. Students are expected to be flexible and open to new learning opportunities and to suggestions from the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and



Fieldwork Team. Scheduling and placement concerns are best addressed when students are open and honest about both their goals for fieldwork and their personal concerns regarding placements. You will need to allow time outside of your classes to review information about fieldwork centers and to complete level II fieldwork requests.

A minimum of 24 weeks full-time (or the equivalent) of Level II Fieldwork is required. KU Medical Center OTE students are required to complete two 12-week fieldwork in two qualitatively different settings. Each student will be required to complete two experiences that coincide with what would be considered appropriate practice areas for entry-level therapists. These two experiences will be qualitatively different in terms of areas of practice.

The Fieldwork Team schedules and arranges all fieldwork placements. Primarily, reservations are secured with facilities in which the Occupational Therapy Education Department already has contracts in place. The fieldwork team may consider developing additional contracts with agencies interested in collaborating with KU Medical Center OTE. We are not currently offering level II placements outside the United States. Students interested in international experiences may contact the Office of International Programs to investigate possible independent study opportunities.

Reservations for fieldwork at particular centers vary from year to year. Therefore, opportunities at a particular setting may be limited.

#### Types of Settings for Fieldwork

Students will have fieldwork experiences in a variety of service provision systems such as large and small hospitals, home-based programs for infants and toddlers or adults, community mental health centers, rehabilitation centers, geriatric centers, and public and private schools. This will allow for a broad exposure to the profession. Students will be exposed to individuals, groups, and populations across the lifespan and with various occupational, physical, and psychosocial performance deficits.

#### Supervision

Students are supervised by occupational therapists with a minimum of one to three years of clinical work experience, depending on the setting. Students may also be co-supervised by occupational therapists with less than a year of experience, occupational therapy assistants, , and/or other professionals. Group and part-time supervisory models may be used at some fieldwork sites.

#### Timeframes

Fieldwork Team members are responsible for scheduling all Level II experiences and for confirming the beginning and ending dates for each fieldwork experience. Students will complete the application for Level II Fieldwork during the Spring 1 semester and are informed of their placements for the two separate 12-week placements in the Fall 2 semester. Fieldwork placements will generally follow the 12-week long rotations for AOTA recommended dates from January through May/June and August through December.

#### Areas of Interest

Students should consider their areas of interest when requesting fieldwork placements. For students who are specifically interested in working in pediatrics or geriatrics, for example, it may be helpful to request fieldwork experiences that will provide these specific opportunities. Students who have not clearly defined a specific area of interest in OT should not be concerned. A benefit of fieldwork is to allow students the opportunity to have a variety of experiences and clarify their career goals.

### Fieldwork Expenses

It is important to plan ahead to meet all financial obligations during fieldwork. Tuition as well as travel, living arrangements, commuting costs, and day-to-day personal expenses may be greater than the expenses incurred during an academic semester. Many fieldwork centers require students to commute between locations during the fieldwork; therefore, a car is necessary.

Some fieldwork centers provide housing or give a monthly allowance (stipend). However, requests for specific fieldwork sites should not be based solely on the availability of housing or a stipend as these may be discontinued with very little notice.

### Fieldwork in the State of Kansas

All OT students should be prepared to complete at least one Level II Fieldwork in the state of Kansas, and outside the greater Kansas City area. These geographic areas may include, but are not limited to Topeka, Leavenworth, Gardner, Paola, North Kansas City, Independence, Lee's Summit and Lawrence.

### Fieldwork in Other States

Students may wish to complete at least one Level II Fieldwork in another state. Financial arrangements and housing options are factors that should be considered by the student prior to requesting out of state Level II Fieldwork opportunities. Completing a fieldwork placement in other geographic regions of the U.S. provides a good opportunity to share ideas with professionals in other regions of the country.

Students who opt for such experiences will be responsible for making arrangements regarding travel, housing, expenses, etc.

### Students with Special Needs

Special scheduling considerations for fieldwork placements (e.g., needing to stay in Kansas City for all fieldworks) may be given to students in the following categories:

- Students who have dependents.
- Students that require accommodations.
- Students who are caretakers of an immediate family member who is ill and/or disabled.

Opportunities will be given to document such requests and to discuss them with a member of the Fieldwork Team during Level II planning in the Spring 1 semester. Special needs that may arise after that time should be brought to the immediate attention of the Fieldwork Team.

### Placement in Sites Where Students Have Had Previous Experience

As a general policy, the Fieldwork Team will not assign a student to a fieldwork site where he/she:

- Has been previously employed and/or has volunteered extensively. Such a placement could put the clinical educator in a difficult situation during evaluation of the student's performance. The level of familiarity may also provide the student with an unfair advantage and may restrict that student's opportunity to gain new experience from a number of different settings.
- Has a family member working in, or collaborating with, a particular site. Such a placement could put the clinical educator in a difficult situation and/or provide the student with an unfair advantage.

Requests for exceptions to this policy may be submitted, in writing, by the student requesting a particular site. The student should provide the Fieldwork Team with rationale that would justify setting aside this policy.

### Changes in Fieldwork Placements

Fieldwork centers may find it necessary to cancel a fieldwork reservation or placement due to unpredictable circumstances (i.e., unexpected staff shortage). When fieldwork placements are canceled it is important for students to maintain a sense of flexibility and optimism. The Fieldwork Team makes every effort to reschedule the student quickly in a fieldwork setting that is of interest to the student and meets the student's educational needs.

## **Health Requirements**

### Required Health Insurance for Fieldwork

The University of Kansas and all fieldwork centers require students to provide proof of current personal health insurance coverage. A student would be removed from a fieldwork experience if their health insurance is not current.

Immunizations Students are expected to maintain current immunizations from the time they enter the OTDE program until they graduate, and students will need to provide documentation of these immunizations to enroll in classes. Being delinquent in providing this documentation can result in termination of access to campus resources. TB tests must be updated annually. Note that some fieldwork sites have additional health requirements. Students will be notified as to their site's particular immunization and health requirements.

### COVID-19 Vaccine Clinical Requirements

The University of Kansas Medical Center, including the University of Kansas School of Health Professions and this academic program, partners with multiple health systems and health care providers to provide clinical and programmatic experiences for its students. Many of our clinical partners are currently requiring all students to have received the COVID-19 vaccine before their on-site experiences and training may begin. As a result, unvaccinated students could be precluded from participating in these activities; this could impact their ability to complete all program requirements. **Students with concerns should speak with the clinical coordinator or department chair.**

### CPR & BLS

CPR certification must be maintained while a student in the KU Med Occupational Therapy Program. In order to participate in any practicum or fieldwork experiences, the program requires students to complete the American Heart Association's [Basic Life Support \(BLS\) for Healthcare Providers](#) training.

### Background Checks

A background check is required for all new students prior to enrollment. OTE does not retain records for these reports of background check. It is recommended that students keep record of their own individual background check reports for possible use during level II fieldwork on-boarding as some facilities require students to have a background check prior to participating in a fieldwork placement at their particular facility. Some facilities will accept the background check completed upon entering the program and some will require another background check completed through their personnel office. The background check completed during application to the OTDE program is confidential and can be found at <https://www.validityacademics.com/> (a username and password are required). Again, OTE does *not* keep record of students' background check reports.

### Professional Liability Insurance for Fieldwork

Fieldwork sites require professional liability coverage for students to participate in activities. The current version of the letter for OTDE students is available through TYPHON, or by speaking with a member of the OTE Department's Fieldwork Team.

***It is the student's responsibility to keep updated copies of all health immunizations, CPR, background checks and a copy of the KUMC OTE professional liability letter in the event that these items are requested by a fieldwork site.***

## **Doctoral Capstone**

The doctoral capstone is an integral part of the OTDE curriculum. All students will begin formulating a plan for their capstone in the second semester of the first year of coursework. Following successful completion of all academic coursework and all required, level II fieldwork experiences, you will participate in a full-time, 14-week doctoral experiential placement which aligns with your professional goals. During the capstone placement, you will complete the capstone project you developed during prior terms of preparatory work, while developing advanced professional skills as you gain in-depth knowledge related to one or more of the following areas: advanced clinical practice, research skills, administration, leadership, program and policy development, advocacy, education, and theory development. Throughout the doctoral capstone placement, you will be mentored by an onsite content expert and faculty from the OTE Department. Upon completion of the doctoral experience and capstone project, you will participate in dissemination activities to advance professional practice.

OTDE students must complete the full-time experiential component within a 14-week time frame. The weekly schedule for attendance must be equal to a full-time equivalent position at the assigned facility. In specific circumstances, a capstone project may be adjusted to become a part-time experience. In these rare cases, the experiential component must be completed within a 27-week time frame. The weekly schedule for attendance for the part-time experience must be equal to 50% of a full-time equivalent for the practice setting.

## **Health Requirements**

### Immunizations

You are expected to maintain current immunizations from the time you enter the OTDE program until you graduate, and you will need to provide documentation of these immunizations to enroll in classes. Being delinquent in providing this documentation can result in termination of your access to campus resources. TB tests must be updated annually. Note that some fieldwork sites have additional health requirements. You will be notified as to your site's particular immunization and health requirements.

### COVID-19 Vaccine Clinical Requirements

The University of Kansas Medical Center, including the University of Kansas School of Health Professions and this academic program, partners with multiple health systems and health care providers to provide clinical and programmatic experiences for its students. Many of our clinical partners are currently requiring all students to have received the COVID-19 vaccine before their on-site experiences and training may begin. As a result, unvaccinated students could be precluded from participating in these activities; this could impact their ability to complete all program requirements. **Students with concerns should speak with the clinical coordinator or department chair.**

### CPR & BLS

CPR certification must be maintained while you are a student. In order to participate in any practicum or fieldwork experiences, we require students to complete the American Heart Association's [Basic Life Support \(BLS\) for Healthcare Providers](#) training.

### Background Checks

A background check is required for all new students prior to enrollment. OTE does not retain records for these reports of background check. Some facilities require students to have a background check prior to participating in a fieldwork placement at their particular facility. Some facilities will accept the background check you had completed upon entering the program and some will require you to have another background check completed through their personnel office. The background check you completed during application to the OTDE program is confidential and can be found at <https://www.validityacademics.com/> (a username and password are required)

### Professional Liability letter

Your fieldwork sites require professional liability coverage for students to participate in activities. The current version of the letter for OTDE students is available through TYPHON, or by speaking with a member of the OTE Department's Academic Fieldwork team.

***It is the student's responsibility to keep updated copies of all health immunizations, CPR, background checks and a copy of the KUMC OTE professional liability letter in the event that these items are requested for capstone.***

## Entry-level OTDE Curriculum

### ***KU Medical Center Academic Calendar***

The Department of Occupational Therapy Education follows the [KU Medical Center academic calendar](#) and ***NOT*** the KU-Lawrence calendar. Orientation will take place on August 17-18 and classes will begin on August 22. As has been the case in the past, the OTE programs do not participate in a fall break in October and instead there will not be classes or other activities during the entire week of Thanksgiving (Nov 21-25). Classes will resume on November 28th with finals week taking place from December 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Program Policies***

The Department of Occupational Therapy Education has approved the following policies for the entry-level professional Occupational Therapy Doctoral Program (OTDE) in compliance with requirements of the School of Health Professions at the University of Kansas Medical Center. These are standing policies, stated in broad terms, designed to set parameters for expectations of students in the entry-level OTDE program.

KU Medical Center and the Department of Occupational Therapy Education are committed to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in all programs and services, and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or veteran status.

### **Curriculum Features**

- All academic courses included in the Entry Level OTD program are offered through the Medical Center campus.
- The faculty has designed the curriculum in a developmental and sequential manner aimed at enhancing student learning. Students in the program enroll in

- the pre-established sequence and proceed through the curriculum with the cohort of students with whom they begin the program. See: [Curriculum sequence](#).
- Each semester's course work is prerequisite to courses in the semester that follows. Students may not take courses out of sequence without prior approval in response to a petition.
  - It is unusual for the Department to allow course exceptions. However, a student may petition the Chair and Program Director and ask for an exemption from a course if the student can document proof of successful completion of that course's content.
  - The Department offers most courses only once per year.
  - A decision to withdraw from a course has significant implications for the completion of the program within the outlined time frame. A student should refer to the [Handbook section describing petitions](#) and consult with your academic advisor if considering this option.

### Enrollment and Class Schedules

- All students are enrolled as full-time students. Students must submit a [written petition](#) to the Program Director to request an exception to this policy.
- Upon admission to the program, students are assigned an academic advisor whose role is to serve as a resource and guide for the students in reference to enrollment and other issues of academic performance.
- The [Curricular sequence](#) is pre-determined and student enrollment in all required classes is assured. Each semester students will be notified by an e-mail to your kumc.edu account of when and how to self-enroll online through the [Enroll & Pay portal](#). Student enrollment may be blocked if a student has not completed university business (*i.e.*, financial requirements, payment of parking fines, provided proof of immunizations, *etc.*).
- Class schedules for each semester are sent via email to for to review and assist with enrolling in subsequent term.

### Progression through the Program

- Students are expected to complete all courses outlined in the curriculum sequence and may not drop courses at will. If a student is considering dropping or withdrawing from a course, he/she must meet with the academic advisor and seek approval for this action (see section on [withdrawing from a course](#)). Dropping a course will jeopardize the student's ability to progress in the curriculum.
- Time Frames for completion of program.
  - Students normally complete the entry-level Occupational Therapy Doctorate program in 8 consecutive semesters over a 3 years period.
  - If unusual or extenuating circumstances arise a student may petition that a variation in the amount of time required to complete the program (*i.e.* more than 3 years) be allowed. The Program Director and/or Fieldwork Team will review the petition. Petitions must be submitted in writing. See policy on "[Petitioning Proactively](#)."
  - All academic preparation and fieldwork in the professional program for full-time students must be completed within 4.5 years of initial matriculation into the program.
- Degree
  - Students completing the requirements of the entry-level program successfully will receive an Occupational Therapy Doctorate degree.

## Tracking Student Academic Performance

- o Students are responsible for keeping track of their academic performance.
  - Whenever student performance in one course falls below a B (3.0 on a 4-point scale), the student should contact his or her course instructor(s) in a timely manner to seek guidance.
  - When performance problems extend beyond one course, students must contact the academic advisor and each relevant course instructor in a timely manner to seek guidance.
- o At the end of each semester students will be notified if they are at [academic risk](#) (GPA<3.0), have been placed on [academic probation](#), or have been [dismissed](#).
- o Note that a [GPA of at least 3.0 is required to enter and remain in Graduate School](#), and this criterion will be applied throughout the OTDE program.

## Eligibility to Sit for the National Certification Examination for Occupational Therapists

- o Graduates of the OTDE program will be eligible to sit for the national certification exam for the occupational therapist, administered by the [National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy \(NBCOT\)](#).
- o All program requirements must be completed before students are eligible to take the NBCOT certification exam.
- o After successful completion of the NBCOT exam, the graduate will be designated as an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR).
- o An OTR may then apply for licensure in all States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.
- o A felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

For more information regarding state qualifications and licensure requirements, please refer to the [AOTA State Licensure](#) webpage.

## Technical Standards for Occupational Therapy Students

Because an entry level Occupational Therapy Degree signifies that the holder is eligible to sit for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy exam and 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 specific expectations.

These [Technical Standards are published on-line](#) and provided to students as part of the process of applying to the entry-level OTDE program. A statement of the student's ability to meet these technical standards is required upon matriculation into the program. Students should speak with the academic advisor if there later is a change in the student's ability to meet these Technical Standards.

- **It is the students' responsibility to notify the Program Director if there is any reason why they cannot meet the [Technical Standards](#) for occupational therapy students.**
- Students who cannot meet one or more of the expectations listed will be referred to [Academic Accommodation Services](#).



- With student and faculty input, the Academic Accommodations Specialist will determine whether reasonable accommodation is possible to facilitate successful completion of the occupational therapy curriculum, preparation for the certification exam, and entry into the profession.
- Addressing the need for accommodation early demonstrates good self-awareness; being proactive in requesting support will limit the potential for jeopardizing academic status due to poor grades. Academic accommodations cannot be applied retroactively.

## Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities

If upon entering the program the student is aware that they have a documented disability that will interfere with their performance in meeting one or more technical standards, the student should notify their academic advisor or the Program Director, and also contact KU Medical Center's Academic Accommodation Services.

- The Academic Accommodations Specialist, the student, and a department liaison will work together to determine whether a reasonable accommodation is appropriate to facilitate successful completion of the OTDE curriculum.
- Students without diagnosed disabilities who are having difficulties meeting performance standards have the option of contacting the Academic Accommodations specialist to seek counsel regarding disability determination and possible need for accommodations.
- Faculty will honor the recommendation for accommodation once formal notification is provided by Academic Accommodations Services.
- Grades or other outcomes cannot be changed retroactively for evaluations or exams completed by a student prior to determination of disability and official notification of accommodation needs.
- Any student, with or without accommodation, who feel the need for additional support are strongly encouraged to speak with [Counseling and Educational Support Services](#) to explore options.

## Professionalism

The following sections relate to professionalism policies and procedures as they apply to both the KUMC OT classroom and community. It is our job as instructors and staff to support your academic learning as well as your professional and personal development. During your duration in the OTDE program, we expect that you practice professionalism in all interactions. Our greatest expectation is that you are open to and active in a growth mindset.

## Attendance

In addition to the [statements about attendance and absences earlier in this Handbook](#), students should consider:

- Prompt, regular attendance, either in-person and/or virtually as appropriate, is expected for all scheduled class sessions and fieldwork assignments. This behavior reflects the process of professional education for occupational therapy students. More specific guidelines for attendance may be established by the instructor of record for each academic or fieldwork course.
- If a student must miss a class, the student is to notify the instructor of record **before** the class begins. This type of absence is still regarded as an unexcused absence Unless approved in a case of emergency.
- 2 unexcused absences or repeated tardiness will be brought to the attention of the student by the instructor as the problem becomes evident. If the behavior is not corrected following an initial conversation, the instructor will complete a



Professional Behavior Report, and the OTDE Program Director will thereby be informed of the repeated problem. At this time, the faculty member and student will collaborate on developing a formal action plan to correct the behavior.

- o If specific attendance guidelines have not been established by the instructor, students may expect that absences greater than the number of credit hours assigned to the course shall be considered excessive (e.g., more than 2 absences for a 2-credit hour course would be excessive). Excessive absence or persistent tardiness is likely to impact successful completion of any academic or fieldwork course and is cause for [non-academic probation](#).

## Extended Absences Guidelines

- o **To better ensure efficient learning within the University of Kansas Medical Center Occupational Therapy Education curriculum, extended leave from program participation will not be recommended or supported beyond three consecutive scheduled weeks of coursework.**
- o All coursework is provided as a part of minimum expectations for competent therapy practice. For this reason, attendance is critical to the student's learning and professional development. While the possibility of extenuating life and/or crisis circumstances is acknowledged, extended absence from the classroom and/or experiential learning environment causes significant concern regarding skill development and knowledge acquisition as it relates to the integration and application of occupational therapy theory for best practices.
- o **For extended absences of less than three weeks**, it is a professional behavior expectation that the student will:
  - Assume responsibility for communication and action plan including reasons for the absence prior to extension except for cases of emergency, and notify the class advisor of the reason for the extended absence.
  - Assume responsibility for collaborative participation in the planning process to make up missed tests, assignments, and learning experiences.
  - Assume responsibility for thoughtful review and discussion regarding the appropriateness of return to the occupational therapy curriculum.
- o **For extended absences of three weeks or more**, the student must withdraw from that semester's coursework. The student remains in good standing in the program and returns to the program when those courses are offered again (each course offered once a year; each semester is prerequisite for subsequent courses). Adherence to this guideline is necessary so as not to jeopardize the quality of education preparation required and/or the professional competence of the graduates of the occupational therapy program. Exceptions to this guideline can be made at the discretion of individual instructors pending approval by the Program Director.

## Professional Appearance

The Department of Occupational Therapy Education and KUMC's School of Health Professions, expects all students to exercise appropriate professional judgment regarding personal appearance, dress, and grooming to be most effective in performing your role and responsibilities. We recognize personal appearance is an important element of self-expression and strive not to dictate appropriate appearance, specifically regarding jewelry or tattoos worn as a matter of personal choice.

In keeping with this approach, OTE acknowledges reasonable self-expression through personal appearance, unless it represents a danger to self or others (e.g., jewelry that can be grabbed or cause skin tears), it conflicts with a student's ability to perform effectively in a specific setting (e.g., is distracting), or it is regarded as offensive or harassing toward others. While participating in service-learning or other community settings, on fieldwork, and during your capstone experience, you will be expected to consider guidelines for personal expression published by AOTA or other professional organizations. Be advised your site may have additional expectations, and it is your obligation to abide by these. Initial concerns for professional appearance will be brought to the attention of the student in a one-on-one conversation between the faculty member and student. The faculty member and student will collaborate on developing a formal action plan to correct the behavior.

The focus should be on learning while you are in class or clinical experiences. Appearance should not detract from your learning experience or the care you are providing to others. You will be expected to adhere to the following guidelines for professional dress code. **Campus ID tags should be worn daily.**

**Jewelry:**

Keep jewelry to a minimum. No big bracelets or necklaces that are distracting to others. Any body piercings should be concealed and not visible. Avoid jewelry that could pose a safety risk in clinical settings.

**Clothing:****Business casual. Provide links:**

No low-cut shirts or blouses.

No t-shirts with words or sayings related to alcohol, drugs, etc.

Shirts should completely cover midriff.

Tank tops and spaghetti straps are not permitted.

No revealing clothing or undergarments should be shown.

Pants and shirts should not be excessively tight-fitting.

No sweatpants. No leggings worn as pants without a long shirt or skirt covering one's buttocks.

Make sure that when you bend over or stretch your arms overhead, you don't reveal chest, stomach, or buttocks.

**Hair & Facial:**

Should be neat and clean.

Facial hair shall be trimmed and neatly groomed.

Fragrances should not be worn

**Fingernails:**

Should be clean and cut to an appropriate length.

**Tattoos:**

Use discretion with any tattoos on your body being visible. E.g. a small tattoo on your ankle is probably okay but a large tattoo on your arm should be covered, when in doubt cover it.

**Shoes:**

Shoes should be comfortable, supportive, and professional looking.

Wear appropriate footwear in clinical settings, e.g., closed-toe, closed-heel, non-slip.

***Please be aware that some facilities may have dress codes and policies which are more stringent than what is listed here. In that case you should follow the dress code policies of your facility.***

## **Behavior and Social Attributes**

The entry-level occupational therapy student always is expected to behave in a professional manner. This includes but is not limited to: effectively representing the School, Department, and the profession both on-campus and off-campus; interacting appropriately with peers, academic/clinical faculty, supervisors, and clients/families; respecting lines of communication and using channels of authority appropriately; and handling personal and professional frustrations in a mature manner. The student is referred to, and is expected to conform with, the [Code of Ethics adopted by the American Occupational Therapy Association](#).

Faculty members will observe professional behaviors and attitudes and may choose to meet with students to discuss concerns about behaviors and performance that are unprofessional, and which will interfere with fieldwork, capstone, and in a professional career. Faculty members will document behaviors that are of concern using the [Professional Behavior Report](#). The report is filed with the OTDE Program Director, who monitors performance issues and patterns to determine the need for future actions. The OTDE Program Director may notify the Department Chair on a case-by-case basis.

Students should be aware that non-academic misconduct may subject the student to disciplinary action, disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion. Refer to [School of Health Professions Policies for the description of non-academic misconduct](#).

## **Course and/or Program Progress changes**

### ***Incomplete Courses***

- OT students must complete all courses within the curriculum's designated time frame. Due to the sequential structure of the curriculum, and the fact that each semester's coursework is prerequisite to subsequent semester courses, unfinished coursework from one semester must be completed before the beginning of the next semester in which the student is enrolled. If a student has unfinished coursework, he/she is not eligible to continue with the next semester's work.
- Occasionally, extraordinary circumstances may lead a student to request additional time beyond the end of the semester (i.e., an *incomplete*). The Occupational Therapy Department handles such requests on a case-by-case basis; there is no guarantee a student's request will be granted.
- A student who is considering taking an incomplete in a course must first meet with his/her academic advisor to discuss the situation. The advisor's role is to assist the student in deciding about how to proceed. If the student decides to request an incomplete, he/she must complete the following steps:
  - The student must submit the request for an incomplete to the course instructor(s) formally in writing, stating the reason for the request. The student must sign and date the written request and submit it to the course instructor. *An email message is not sufficient.*
  - The student must arrange to meet with the course instructor within one week of submitting this written request to discuss details of the request.
  - The course instructor and Program Director together will review the circumstances and determine whether to grant the incomplete.

- o The course instructor will notify the student in writing of the decision within one week after the meeting takes place.
- o The student must continue to complete all coursework as outlined in the syllabus until a formal written response is received from the instructor.
- **If an incomplete is granted:**
  - o The instructor will develop a written agreement within one week of the meeting between the student and instructor; both the instructor and student will sign the agreement.
    - This agreement will include work expectations and a time frame for course completion.
    - The agreement will specify the consequences for failing to meet the terms of the agreement.
    - Copies of the signed agreement will be given to the student, kept by the instructor, and placed in the student's departmental file.
      - After all the above steps are completed, the instructor will submit a grade of incomplete.
      - When the student successfully completes the agreement in the time frame established, the instructor will submit a grade change from incomplete to the grade earned.
      - **If the student does not complete the requirements of the agreement in the time frame specified, his/her grade for the unfinished work will be a zero.** The instructor will assign the subsequent final grade as outlined in the syllabus.
- **If the instructor does not grant an incomplete:**
  - o The instructor will notify the student in writing within one week of the meeting.
  - o The student will be expected to complete the course as outlined in the syllabus.
  - o The student will receive the course grade earned at the end of the semester.

### ***Withdrawal from a Course***

- *Withdrawal* from a course may jeopardize a student's ability to complete the program due to the sequential and developmental nature of the curriculum (i.e., every semester's coursework is prerequisite to subsequent semester coursework).
- Students who are considering withdrawing from one or more courses must contact their academic advisor. The role of the advisor is to assist the student in deciding about how to proceed.
- If the student decides to request a *withdrawal*, he/she must submit this request in writing to the Program Director. The request must include:
  - o The course(s) from which the student is requesting a withdrawal
  - o The reason(s) for the withdrawal request, and
  - o The student's proposed plan for completing the course and the program.
- The Program Director will consider each request for withdrawal on a case-by-case basis and determine whether and how the student may proceed in the program.
- When a student withdraws from a course, the point of the semester in which the student withdraws will determine the notation on the transcript (i.e., W for withdrawal, letter grade, or no class notation recorded). For specific dates regarding what is noted on the student transcripts please refer to the [University Registrar's enrollment webpage](#) and read about how a withdrawal affects grades recorded on the official transcript.
- Students should be aware a withdrawal may reduce or change eligibility for financial aid.

## ***Withdrawal from the Program***

- Occasionally extraordinary personal or medical circumstances, or a change in career direction, may lead a student to question whether to continue in the program. If this occurs, the student must meet with his or her advisor and develop a plan about whether to continue.
- When a student withdraws from the program (*i.e.*, drops all courses), the point of the semester in which the student withdraws will determine the notation on the transcript (*i.e.*, W for withdrawal, letter grade, or no class notation recorded). For specific dates regarding what is noted on the student transcripts please visit the [University Registrar's enrollment webpage](#) and read about withdrawal effects on grades recorded on transcript.
- Procedures for withdrawal from the OTDE program:
  - The student must inform his/her academic advisor that he/she is withdrawing from the program.
  - The student must submit a letter to the Department Chairperson and Program Director stating that he/she is withdrawing and why.
  - The student must inform the KU Medical Center [Registrar's Office](#) that he/she is withdrawing, and then complete a withdrawal notice.
  - The department coordinator will electronically approve or disapprove the withdrawal.
  - The department coordinator will notify the Program Director, advisor, and appropriate personnel of the completed withdrawal.
  - The department coordinator will record a copy of the withdrawal in the student's academic file.

## **Course/Progress changes during Level II Fieldwork**

### ***Mid-Term Difficulties***

- Notification
  - When student performance on Level II Fieldwork is unsatisfactory at mid-term, the student or the Fieldwork Educator will notify the Fieldwork Team.
  - A Fieldwork Team member discusses the situation and reviews progress with the student and the Fieldwork Educator.
- The student has two options:
  - Continue with the fieldwork, or
  - Withdraw from the fieldwork with a grade of W. If the student withdraws, he/she will have to repeat a separate fieldwork experience.
- In both of these two options, the student develops a plan to address the difficulties and issues encountered with consultation from the Fieldwork Educator and Fieldwork Team. The Fieldwork Team must approve the plan. Without an acceptable approved plan, the student will not proceed in the program. If delays exceed maximum program time allowed for completion, he or she might be ineligible to complete the program.
- If the student chooses to withdraw from the fieldwork, he/she must complete another fieldwork experience before being eligible to enroll in further academic coursework.

### ***Withdrawal from Level II Fieldwork***

- **The Occupational Therapy Department does not recommend students withdraw from a Level II Fieldwork experience.** Withdrawal may jeopardize the student's ability to complete the program in a timely manner. See policy on "[Time Frames for Completion of Program](#)" in the General Program Policies section.

- The student must request withdrawal by submitting a written request to the Fieldwork Team for approval and meeting in person with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- If a student chooses to withdraw from a Level II Fieldwork placement without following the above procedure and receiving the approval of the Fieldwork Team, they will Fail the Fieldwork, a grade of an “F” will be recorded in the student’s official transcript, and the student will be dismissed from the program.

### ***Receiving an Incomplete for a Level II Fieldwork Experience***

- In unusual and extraordinary circumstances, the Fieldwork Team may assign a grade of “*incomplete*”. Examples of unusual and extraordinary circumstances are:
  - Significant FW site personnel/program changes.
    - The student may be rescheduled at another fieldwork site.
  - Severe student illness or personal/family emergency
    - The student may be rescheduled after providing satisfactory evidence that the issues leading to the incomplete are resolved and the student has developed a plan to address similar situations in the future.
- Incompletes for Level II Fieldwork can also occur when fieldwork extends beyond the academic calendar timeframe. Upon completion of 12-weeks of fieldwork and fieldwork evaluation, Incomplete grades will be updated by the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.
- The Fieldwork Team will direct these processes and make the decisions required.

## **Academic & Non-Academic expectations**

### ***Academic Performance***

- **Eligibility Standards**
  - Students must earn at least a 3.0 GPA in each semester (“*semester GPA*”) to remain in good standing as a graduate student.
  - Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher in the program (“*cumulative GPA*”) to remain in good standing as a graduate student.
  - Students must earn a C or above in all coursework, except:
    - Level II Fieldwork, in which students must earn a B or above.
    - Capstone Experience, in which students must earn a B or above.

### ***Academic and Non-Academic Probation***

- **Professional Behavior Report**
  - A Professional Behavior Report is one action available to faculty for documenting alleged Academic and/or Non-academic Misconduct by students. The report provides an opportunity for faculty to document and discuss with students any problematic behavior or related concerns that may impact the student’s academic success in the classroom and on fieldwork. The Professional Behavior Report is intended to serve as a means to document and encourage opportunities for the student’s professional growth.
  - Faculty members will meet with the student to discuss concerns about problematic behavior that may interfere with fieldwork or a professional career. The faculty member will document the behavior of concern using the Professional Behavior Report form and describe strategies for remediation as warranted.
  - The report must be shared with the student and signed by the student, his/her advisor, the course instructor (if applicable to a course) and the Chair of the OTE

Department. The completed report is filed with the Department Chair, who monitors performance issues and patterns to determine need for future action.

- **Academic Probation**
  - Students will be placed on probation by the Office of Graduate Studies if the cumulative graduate GPA in the OTDE program drops below 3.0 at the end of any graduate semester.
    - When a graduate student is on probation, the student must earn grades the next semester (the probationary semester) to raise the cumulative graduate GPA to 3.0 or higher.
    - When a graduate student raises the cumulative graduate GPA to 3.0 or above, the student automatically will return to good academic standing.
    - If a student fails to raise the cumulative graduate GPA to 3.0 or above during a probationary semester, the Office of Graduate Studies will dismiss the student from the program.
    - The OTE Department may petition the Office of Graduate Studies on behalf of a student to request extension of the probation. The final decision regarding an extension will be made by the Office of Graduate Studies
- **Non-Academic (Disciplinary) Probation:** may be a consequence of a student's behavior in the program.
  - Students in this program may receive sanctions and/or be placed on disciplinary probation if either of the following are true:
    - A student does not meet [professional behavioral expectations](#).
    - A student engages in academic or non-academic misconduct as outlined in the [School of Health Professions Policies](#).
  - If a behavior is egregious or recurrent after warnings, the student may be dismissed without probation.
  - The purpose of a disciplinary probation for non-academic misconduct is to remediate or retrain the student and may include suspension of specified privileges for a definite period not to exceed two years.
  - Disciplinary probation may require the student to participate in specified activities to address individualized needs for additional training or remediation.

## ***Dismissal***

- Students in this program will be dismissed if any of the following occur:
  - The student who is on academic probation fails to raise the cumulative graduate GPA to 3.0 or above.
  - A student receives a “D” or an “F” as a final grade in any course.
  - The student earns a semester GPA during the last semester of the program that causes the student’s cumulative graduate GPA to fall below 3.0.
  - A student on disciplinary probation exhibits recurrent or other behaviors that require a second disciplinary action.

## **Academic Integrity & Professional Standards System (AIPSS)**

The Occupational Therapy Education Department at the University of Kansas is committed to effective academic and clinical preparation of entry-level occupational therapists and to scholarly advancement of occupational therapy practitioners and interdisciplinary partners. As an academic community, the department recognizes the importance of respectful academic exchanges that enlighten, educate, and enrich the lives of students and faculty. Fruitful



academic exchanges can only occur in an environment that promotes high ethical standards and regard for academic integrity.

The [SHP Student Handbook](#) states “each student will sign and date a statement indicating they have access to and have read the department/program policies, the regulations and conditions related to academic misconduct and nonacademic misconduct, and the School of Health Professions student handbook.” Students must certify they have read these policies, understand them, and agree to abide by them. The OTE office will maintain this signed verification.

### **Honor Pledge**

Each student and faculty member will confirm their commitment to uphold professional standards through ethical academic participation by signing the following honor pledge:

***"As a member of the academic community, I pledge that I will not tolerate or engage in academic or non-academic misconduct and will uphold the academic integrity and professional standards of this program and my profession."***

The **Academic Integrity and Professional Standards System (AIPSS)** supports these standards for our academic community by delineating a process for managing student-related academic or non-academic misconduct. Both Academic and Non-academic Misconduct are described in the School of Health Professions Section of the KU Medical Center Student Handbook. The handbook can be accessed online at [www.kumc.edu/studenthandbook](http://www.kumc.edu/studenthandbook). AIPSS includes a committee comprised of faculty sharing responsibility for System implementation, evaluation, and action recommendations. The System promotes an environment where students and faculty jointly support mutual professionalism, ethical conduct, and academic integrity.

### **Academic Misconduct is defined as:**

- Giving, receiving, or utilizing unauthorized aid on examinations, assignments, preparation of notebooks, themes, reports, projects and/or other assignments or undertakings
- Misrepresenting the source of academic work (including plagiarism)
- During clinical education, inappropriate acts or omissions which place the service recipient in jeopardy
- During clinical education, any breach or violation of the confidence of a person being served
- Unethical practices in conducting and/or reporting research

Article II, Section 6 of the KU Rules and Regulations of the University Senate

<https://policy.ku.edu/governance/USRR>

### **Non-academic Misconduct includes but is not limited to:**

- Exhibition of non-professional behaviors
- Conviction of a felony involving moral turpitude
- Material misrepresentation concerning past achievements or present endeavors
- Habitual drug/alcohol/substance abuse
- Any other acts or omissions which, if the student were a credentialed practitioner, could result in discipline by the credentialing agency such as but not limited to:

Section IV of the KU Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities

<https://policy.ku.edu/code-student-rights-and-responsibilities-student-code>



- Placing patients in needless jeopardy by acting or performing inappropriately
- Unethical alteration, elimination or inadequate reporting and documentation in a patient's chart or billing record
- Disruptive behavior, verbal abuse, or obscene language.

### ***AIPSS Process***

- **Confidentiality**
  - Students, faculty, and staff who participate in the reporting, investigation, or hearing of suspected misconduct are bound to confidentiality. All documentation related to suspected misconduct will be secured appropriately.
- **Education**
  - During the beginning of the academic program a description on academic and non-academic misconduct will be reviewed as well as the function of the Committee.
  - New staff and faculty will be required to attend or obtain the information regarding this process

### ***AIPSS Committee***

- **Scope**
  - This committee's mandate includes addressing issues of academic and non-academic misconduct by students.
- **Committee composition**
  - There will be four members of the AIPSS committee
  - Three committee members will be appointed by the Chair of the OTE Department. These committee members will be selected from among OTE faculty. Each of these members will have one vote.
  - The student's advisor, or another OTDE faculty member named by the student will serve as the 4<sup>th</sup> faculty member on this committee and will serve in a non-voting capacity.
  - The Chair of the OTE Department will appoint a replacement member selected from among OT Ed faculty should a serving member be unavailable or if there may be a potential conflict of interest.
  - The Chair of the OTE Department is not eligible to serve as a member of the AIPSS committee.
  - Length of committee service will be determined at the time of appointment to the committee.
- **Selection of Chair**
  - The AIPSS Chair will be designated by committee members.
  - The AIPSS Chair will be responsible for convening meetings, overseeing voting, reporting outcomes to the OTE Department Chair, and all other procedural tasks.
- **Quorum**
  - Votes must be cast in a binary manner; abstentions will not be allowed.
  - A quorum will be defined as a simple majority of the participating appointed committee members eligible to vote.

### ***Exploration of Misconduct***

- **Direct Inquiry**

The Department recognizes the value of exchanges between faculty members and students as a critical step in the evaluation of academic integrity and professional

standards. We consider direct interaction between faculty and students to be the primary means for giving and receiving professional feedback.

***When direct faculty and student interaction leads to satisfactory resolution, there will be no need for further action beyond agreed upon terms between faculty and student as stated in the [Professional Behavior Report](#).***

In the event that issues of academic or non-academic misconduct are not resolved, faculty or student may request an **investigative hearing** to review suspected or admitted acts of misconduct and to determine appropriate sanctions.

- **Investigation and hearing**

Occurrences of suspected misconduct will be addressed using the following procedures:

- Report of occurrence: Any person suspecting misconduct that has not been resolved with the parties (e.g., faculty and student in a course) will report the incident in question to a member of the committee, either orally or in writing. Initial reports made by faculty, staff and students must be made within (5) academic days from the day of detection. The committee member will inform the individual reporting the suspected misconduct that it will be necessary to disclose his/her name to the student only if the investigation determines that a hearing is needed. When a faculty member reports an occurrence, he/she cannot apply sanctions for any suspected occurrence. The committee chair will exercise discretion as to whether to proceed with an investigation when a report of suspected misconduct is received outside the usual reporting time.
- Committee members are responsible for reporting occurrences to the committee chair within (2) two academic days of receiving a report of an occurrence. The committee chair will appoint an investigator from among the faculty members on the committee within two academic days. All data gathered by the investigator will be documented in writing. The investigator is charged to speak with the person reporting the occurrence, the student in question, and other individuals who may be involved directly. Confidentiality will be maintained in all cases. In cases where patient safety is a factor, identification of the student in question will be revealed strictly on a need-to-know basis. After data are gathered, the investigator will meet with the committee chairperson to determine the need for a hearing.
- The student in question will be notified by the committee chair of the suspected misconduct within two academic days of receiving the report. Relevant evidence known to the Committee Chair and/or investigator will be made available to the student being investigated. During the time of the investigation and pending a hearing the student is encouraged to continue attending class. The student may not drop a course to avoid investigation of alleged misconduct or imposition of sanction if it is found that misconduct occurred. Only if it is found that misconduct did not occur, or if the charges are dismissed, may the course be dropped following the regular procedures of the University.
- The investigator and the Committee Chair will meet as soon as possible, but not later than 5 academic days after the appointment of the investigator, to determine whether evidence is sufficient to require a hearing. If a hearing is to be held, the student in question will be notified, informed of the allegations, told the name of

the person who reported the incident, given a copy of the investigators report, and be informed of the right to consult an Advisor selected by the student from the OTE Faculty. Each party will be notified of the date, time, and place of the hearing no later than 2 academic days prior to the hearing. The person who reported the incident also will be informed that a hearing will be held, given a copy of the investigator's report, and informed of the right to consult their advisor. At this time, committee members will receive notice of hearing and supporting documented materials related to the investigation.

- If the Committee Chair and the investigator determine there is insufficient evidence to bring the case to a hearing, the student will be notified by means of direct communication, either in writing or in person, within 2 academic days that the charge has been dismissed. All documented materials related to the investigation will be destroyed and information about the investigation will remain confidential.
  - All cases will be heard by the committee within 15 academic days after the Committee Chairperson and investigator determine there is sufficient evidence to hold a hearing. Cases not heard within this period will be dismissed, unless extraordinary circumstances prevent a hearing within the 15 academic days.
  - Without prior notification to the Committee Chair, failure to report to the hearing will result in the following action:
    - Failure to appear on the part of the student in question: Decision is made based on that student's testimony given to the Committee investigator during the investigation process. The right to further speak to the alleged misconduct or answer additional questions is waived.
    - Failure to appear on the part of the individual who reported the occurrence: Dismissal of the case.
  - In instances where the student in question admits that he/she committed the misconduct, the Committee will be given access to the investigator's report and will meet to recommend sanction(s).
  - The hearing will occur prior to any action being taken by the Committee to recommend sanction. If the student in question denies committing the alleged misconduct, if any occurred and to recommend sanction.
  - The student in question and the Committee are entitled to call witnesses. An Advisor may serve as a witness on behalf of the student in question. Names of persons who will approach the committee will be presented to the Committee chairperson by the student in question following scheduling of a hearing and at least 5 academic days prior to the hearing date. The Committee chairperson will disclose all witnesses to the appropriate persons at least 2 academic days prior to the hearing. All witnesses will appear in person to testify before the Committee and are subject to cross-examination by both committee members and the student in question. Facts pertaining to the case will not be shared with the witnesses by the committee.

## Hearing Procedures

- The Hearing Panel will be comprised of the members of the Committee excluding the member who served as the investigator for the case in question.
- The hearing will always be presided over by the Committee Chair. The individual presiding over the hearing will decide all questions of procedure, evidence, and conduct of the proceedings. The Committee chair may recess or adjourn the hearing upon request of any Hearing Panel member, student, counsel, or his/her own motion upon such terms and conditions as he/she deems just.
- Recognizing the need for both a rapid resolution and the complexity of committee member's schedules, the Hearing Panel may be convened in-person or virtually.
- The only persons allowed in closed hearing of the committee will be the student in question and his/her Advisor, the individual who reported the occurrence and his/her Advisor, witnesses while testifying, Committee members, and the individual presiding over the hearing. The student in question and the individual who reported the occurrence each present his/her testimony. The student in question has the right to question the individual who reported the incident. The name of the individual who reported the occurrence will be known only to the chair of the committee, members of the committee, the student in question, and the Advisor.
- There will be a record (e.g., audio recording) made of the proceedings. Upon written request and at his/her own expense, any student aggrieved by an adverse decision of the Hearing Panel may request and obtain a transcript of the proceeding.
- No student can be compelled to testify at any Committee hearing nor to answer questions posed by the hearing panel; no inference can be drawn by the Hearing Panel against a student in question due to his/her failure or refusal to testify or respond to questions.
  - Determination of whether or not the student committed the alleged misconduct will be made by vote of the committee members. The decision will be based on a simple majority of all present, eligible voting members. Only members of the Committee who have heard all the evidence concerning the case in question will vote. The Committee Chair will not vote except in the event of a tie. When determining the number of votes needed for a simple majority, the base number will be determined by counting the total number of votes cast. Abstentions are not permitted. Voting will occur by secret ballot. Extenuating circumstances will not be considered in deciding whether or not the misconduct occurred.
  - There will be a separate vote by secret ballot on the recommended sanction. The sanction will be determined by a majority vote of those committee members eligible to vote on the case. The Committee Chair will vote only in the case of a tie. "Extenuating circumstances" may be deemed acceptable grounds for deviation by the Committee or the Appeals Committee from these sanctions.
- **Sanction options for academic misconduct or abuse of academic resources.** When appropriate, more than one sanction and/or educational measure may be imposed.
  - **Admonition:** Oral statement that his or her present actions constitute academic misconduct or abuse of academic resources.
  - **Warning:** An oral or written statement that continuation or repetition, within a stated period, of actions which constitute academic misconduct or abuse of academic resources may be the cause for a more severe disciplinary sanction.

- **Censure:** A written reprimand for actions, which constitute academic misconduct or abuse of academic resources. Censure may include written warning.
  - **Reduction of grade:** Treating as unsatisfactory any work which is a product of academic misconduct, or which was based upon the abuse of academic resources. Reduction of grade may include the awarding of an F in the course.
  - **Disciplinary Probation:** Exclusion from participation in a specified privileged or extracurricular activity for a period not exceeding 1 academic year.
  - **Suspension:** Exclusion from classes and other specified privileges or activities for a definite period not in excess of 2 academic years.
  - **Expulsion:** Termination of student status for an indefinite period. The conditions of readmission, if any will be stated in the order of expulsion.
- **Sanction options in order of increasing severity for non-academic misconduct.** When appropriate, more than one sanction and/or educational measure may be imposed.
    - **Warning:** Notice in writing that continuation or repetition of conduct found wrongful, within a period of time stated in the warning, may be the cause for more severe disciplinary action.
    - **Restitution:** Reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property. This may take the form of appropriate service or other compensation.
    - **Fine:** A money payment to a designated University fund.
    - **Disciplinary Probation:** Disciplinary probation shall have as its purpose the rehabilitation of the student or organization and may include suspension of specified privileges for a definite period not to exceed two years. Disciplinary probation also may require the student or organization to participate in specified activities, including one counseling information session, or may prescribe any program that is deemed just and fair under the circumstances of the case. The authority imposing this sanction may assign any qualified person within the University community, other than an undergraduate student, to act as a probation supervisor. The probation supervisor should report periodically to the appointing authority. If the probation supervisor should report that the student is not fulfilling probation requirements, the case will be reviewed by the Committee, who may recommend additional sanctions.
    - **Campus/Community Service:** Students or organizations may be required to complete a specified number of service hours to an identified campus or community agency. The authority imposing this sanction (The Committee) may assign any qualified person to serve as the service supervisor. If the service supervisor should report that the student or organization has not fulfilled the service requirements, the case will be reviewed by the Committee, who may recommend additional sanctions.
    - **Student Suspension:** Exclusion from University privileges and activities as set out in the order after a hearing for a definite period not to exceed two years. The conditions of re-admission shall be stated in the order of suspension.
    - **Organization Suspension:** Exclusion from University privileges and activities as set out in the order after a hearing for a definite period not to exceed two years. The conditions of reinstatement shall be stated in the order of suspension.

- **Student Expulsion:** Termination of student status for a minimum of 2 years. The conditions of readmission, if any, shall be stated in the order of expulsion.
- **Removal of Organization registration:** Termination of registered organizational status for a minimum of 2 years. The conditions of re-authorization or organizational registration, if any, shall be stated in the order of removal of registration.

### ***Committee Reporting and Recommendations***

- Following the committee's decision, findings from the hearings will be forwarded to the Chair of the Occupational Therapy Education Department by the Committee Chairperson within two (2) academic days after recommendation(s) have been formulated. Findings will include the Committee's decision of whether or not misconduct was committed. If the committee finds that misconduct was committed, they also will recommend one or more sanctions to the Chair, who will make a final determination of the sanction(s) to be imposed and whom then will notify the student.
- Formal written notification of the Chair's decision will be sent to the student within five (5) academic days by certified or registered mail. The Chair will notify the hearing Chair of the decision in writing using the most expeditious means available. If the sanction is relevant to the person reporting the occurrence, the Chair will also notify that individual.
- The Committee Chair will notify the individual who reported the incident that an investigation has been conducted and that appropriate action has been taken following the decision.
- All data from the investigation and hearings are confidential. Except for the investigator assigned to collect data related to a reported incident, members of the Committee will not discuss cases with anyone not connected with the Committee. During the investigation, the investigator will maintain confidentiality during all contacts to collect data. Breaches of confidentiality will result in immediate dismissal from the Committee. Witnesses and Advisors also will be bound by confidentiality.
- All records and evidence from the hearing, including notes taken by individual Hearing members, will be collected by the Committee Chairperson before the Hearing Committee disbands. These materials will be secured in the OTE office for five years.

### **Procedural safeguards**

The Occupational Therapy Education Department has adopted procedures to safeguard the student who believes personal circumstances have affected his/her performance in the program, or that his/her rights have been violated. These procedures describe the methods by which a student can **petition** or **grieve** a decision made in the department.

In the case of a **petition**, the student asks that an exception be made to a department policy or rule. In the case of a **grievance**, the student is asking for a change in a judgment because he/she believes that a policy or rule has been misapplied.

### ***Petitions***

- What is the purview of a petition?
  - A student has the right to petition for an exception to any department policy. A student files a petition only when his/her individual circumstances are compelling and extraordinary.
  - The Chair of the Occupational Therapy Program will convene an appropriate committee within the Occupational Therapy Department to review and rule on

each petition. That committee will take any petition seriously and will consider all pertinent information carefully before making a decision that it feels is in the best interest of the petitioner, other students and the program itself. Setting aside policy is considered a highly unusual action and will be considered only in the most extraordinary situations. In the case of a conflict of interest, a faculty member will be recused and will be replaced by an alternate faculty member.

- **Petitioning Proactively**
  - A student files a petition **proactively** when he/she anticipates an upcoming requirement in the typical curricular progression that he/she proposes to approach differently. In this case, the student is asking that a policy be set aside for compelling reasons, before the situation occurs. It is a personal request and applies only to the petitioner.
  - Examples of petitions that one might file proactively include:
    - Petitioning for an exemption from a course or portion of a course in the curriculum
    - Petitioning for a change in the typical course sequence
    - Petitioning for an exception to the fieldwork policy.
  - The **student's** responsibilities in the proactive petition process are the following:
    - Meet with his/her academic advisor for guidance on the process, suggested timeline, etc.
    - Submit a petition in writing, to the Department Chair.
    - Cite the specific policy that he or she wishes to set aside, and state clearly how he/she is anticipating approaching the situation differently (i.e., how the student proposes to alter his or her program).
    - Provide relevant information regarding the situation that would support a decision to set aside a policy. (This might include information from the student as well as from other key individuals).
    - Submit all information in a timely manner so that the Department committee considering the petition has at least five working days to address the situation and make an informed decision.
  - The **Occupational Therapy Department's** responsibilities in the process are the following:
    - The Department Chair will forward the petition to the appropriate committee.
    - The committee will review and consider all relevant information the student provides and the committee gathers. The committee will then provide a decision to the petitioner and to the Department Chair, in writing, within five working days of the submission of the petition.
    - If the petition is accepted, the committee acting on the petition may set additional parameters that would be required to address and manage the situation.
- **Petitioning for Reinstatement/Permission to Continue in the Program**
  - Students may file these petitions when they have been dismissed from the program for violation of OT Program or Graduate school policies on academic or behavioral standards. These petitions are filed retroactively – after a policy has been violated. Examples of reinstatement petitions include:
    - Petitioning for an exception to the "eligibility for graduate school" policy.
    - Petitioning for consideration of "unusual circumstances" in order to continue in graduate school.



- Petitioning for permission to continue in academic coursework after withdrawing from a Level II fieldwork experience.
- Under these circumstances, a student files a petition for reinstatement only if he/she feels that the circumstances that led to his/her violation of a department or graduate school policy were **extraordinary, temporary** and **resolved**.
- The **student's** responsibilities in the reinstatement petition process are the following:
  - Meet with his/her academic advisor. The academic advisor can provide assistance with the procedures for filing the reinstatement petition but cannot assist with the content of the written petition.
  - Provide a written statement, to include:
    - The specific policy that the petitioner is asking to be set aside.
    - Description of the relevant circumstances that led to violation of the cited policy.
    - Evidence that these circumstances were **extraordinary, temporary, and are resolved**.
    - Explanation of actions taken while the situation was occurring that demonstrate the petitioner's attempt(s) to avoid or resolve the current situation.
    - Outline of a plan to keep the situation from recurring.
  - Include supporting documentation, if relevant, from other individuals.
  - Submit the petition to the department chair **within three weeks** of written notification of dismissal.
- The **Occupational Therapy Department's** responsibilities are the following:
  - The Department Chair will pass the petition to the appropriate committee for consideration.
  - The committee assigned to consider the petition will review all information provided by the petitioner as well as other information relevant to the situation (e.g., grades during previous semesters, information from the academic advisor, fieldwork assessments, behavior reports, etc.)
  - If reinstatement is recommended, the committee may set contingencies for continuing in the program. Examples include evidence of seeking and receiving appropriate professional help, or successful completion of supplementary coursework.
  - The committee acting on the petition will notify the petitioner and the Department Chair in writing of the Committee's decision within five working days of the petition's submission.

## **Grievances**

- What is the purview of a grievance?
  - The student may file a grievance when asking for a change in a judgment because he/she believes that a policy or a rule has been misapplied.
- Timing of the grievance process
  - The student has **30 days** from the date of the initial problem occurrence to file the written request for a review from the departmental grievance committee. This means that the student has the responsibility to act in a timely manner to ensure enough time for preliminary steps to occur.
  - The student is not eligible to file a grievance unless the preliminary steps have been completed.

- Preliminary steps to filing a grievance
  - The student must first make an attempt to resolve the problem situation with the party or parties involved.
  - The student may seek advice or counsel regarding handling the concern from his or her academic advisor if desired
  - If the problem is not resolved with the parties involved, and if the student feels that he/she wants to pursue the grievance further, the student must make an appointment with the Department Chairperson or designee to discuss the problem situation. The student must provide evidence of attempts to resolve the problem situation with the party or parties involved, and state what policy or rule the student believes has been misapplied. The chairperson will attempt to resolve the problem situation with the student and other parties. This process may involve meetings, interviews, records review and other appropriate information gathering methods.
  - If the student's effort with the chairperson does not resolve the problem situation. The student may file a grievance as outlined below.
- Procedure for filing a grievance
  - Initial step
    - The student must request in writing to the department chairperson that the departmental grievance committee review the problem situation.
  - Preparing the grievance
    - The student must prepare written documentation regarding the problem situation. The written documentation must indicate the Departmental rules and regulations the student believes have been misapplied (e.g., arbitrary or capricious application, error in application) and the nature of the misapplication. The student must submit this documentation to the Grievance Committee and to other involved parties within 5 days of informing the chairperson of the decision to pursue a grievance process.
    - All relevant parties must exchange copies of materials and names of individuals with relevant information within this 5-day period.
  - The grievance hearing
    - The committee shall hold a hearing within five working days of submission of materials unless the committee determines that there is a good cause to schedule the hearing later.
    - The chair of the committee shall be responsible for assuring the hearing proceeds in an orderly and fair manner.
    - Because the committee has the responsibility to hear grievances, it cannot function to develop evidence on behalf of either complainant or respondent.
    - The grievance proceedings shall be as informal as possible. The use of legal counsel is not recommended.
    - The committee will tape record the hearing.
    - The hearing record will include the tape recording, copies of submitted materials and documentation of committee recommendations. The Department will keep these materials for five years.
    - The grievance hearing shall be closed to all but the parties involved. The grievance hearing process will remain confidential.
    - The student shall bear the burden of proof regarding the grievance.
    - After reviewing the evidence and hearing arguments presented concerning the problem situation, the committee shall deliberate and decide by majority vote on a recommendation.

- The Grievance Committee chair is responsible for documenting and communicating the committee's recommendations to the Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy Education.
- The Chair of the Occupational Therapy Department has the responsibility to review all relevant information and document the final decision on behalf of the department.
- The Chairperson shall notify each party in writing regarding the recommendation of the committee and the decision of the department Chairperson, within five working days of his/her receipt of the committee recommendation.
- If any party chooses to appeal the decision of the department chairperson concerning the grievance, they must make this request in writing to the Dean of the School of Health Professions within ten days after receiving the decision of the department.
- o Grievance committee composition
  - The Grievance Committee will have three faculty members; when the grievance originates from a student, there will also be a student member, for a total of four members.
  - The Grievance Committee will serve on an *ad hoc* basis, *i.e.*, for the duration of a particular grievance.
  - The Chair of the Department will exclude all faculty who may have a conflict of interest regarding the grievance. From among the remaining faculty, the chair will select three persons with varying levels of experience in the department.
  - The members of the committee will select the Committee Chair.
  - The Committee Chair is responsible for selecting a student member when needed. The committee chair will solicit recommendations from faculty who do not have a conflict of interest. The Committee Chair will select a student based on the student's availability and willingness to serve.

~~~~~ OTDE Student Handbook ends here ~~~~~